Swedish American Genealogist

Volume 19
Number 2 *Double Issue*

Article 1

9-1-1999

Full Issue Vol. 19 Nos. 2 & 3

(ISSN 0275-9314)

Swedish American Genealogist

A journal devoted to Swedish American biography, genealogy and personal history

Essays Presented to

Dr. Nils William Olsson

in Honor of His

90th Birthday

Vol. XIX **June/September 1999** **Nos. 2 & 3**

Swedish American Genealogist

(ISSN 0275-9314)

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Subscriptions are $25.00 per annum and run for the calendar year. Single copies are $8.00 each. Swenson Center Associates are entitled to a special discounted subscription price of $15.00. Questions dealing with membership, back issues, mailing, advertising and other financial matters should be referred to Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Rock Island.

Questions dealing with editorial matter, queries, manuscripts, ahnentafeln, etc., should be referred to the editor in Minneapolis, MN.

In Sweden the subscription price is 200.00 Swedish *kronor* per year for surface delivery, 250.00 *kronor* for air. In Scandinavia the subscription fee may be deposited in a *postgiro* account No. 260 10-9, *Swedish American Genealogist*, Box 30222, 104 25 Stockholm, SWEDEN.

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Introduction

James E. Erickson

Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and the quarry from which you were dug.
—The prophet Isaiah

This special issue represents the culmination of a process that began well over one year ago. My initial request for manuscripts to be published in *SAG* in honor of Nils William Olsson's ninetieth birthday was met with an immediate and overwhelmingly positive response. To all who supported this effort, I am deeply grateful. I only regret that time and circumstances did not allow for even wider participation but, as one of the contributors so succinctly put it, "As far as Nils William's other friends and colleagues here [in Sweden] are concerned, it is a natural but sad fact that most of them are lying in different churchyards and thus they will hardly be able to contribute. Alas!"[1]

As I contemplate my dear friend and mentor, who becomes a nonagenarian on 11 June 1999 (and will be forty years my senior!), I keep asking myself the same questions. What is left to be said about an individual upon whom most accolades have already been bestowed? Whose *festschrift* has already been published? Whose achievements have already been recognized? Whose legacy has already been assured?

In this premillennial period of history—characterized by the immediacy of e-mail, the horror of internecine warfare, the explosion of information, the hysteria of Y2K, the proliferation of mallspeak (teenbonics), and the general dumbing down of everything—I can unequivocally state that I am encouraged by Nils William the man, who embodies dedication and skill, and I am inspired by his corpus of genealogical work, which reflects excellence and scholarship. His legacy will forever be tied to the fact that he, more than anyone else in the U.S. in the twentieth century, encouraged and enabled Americans of Swedish ancestry to remember their "rocks" and locate their "quarries."

In a spirit of profound respect and gratitude, I am pleased to present this collection of essays to Dr. Nils William Olsson, Editor Emeritus of *Swedish American Genealogist,* in honor of his ninetieth birthday.

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[1] Folke Sandgren, letter to author, 10 September 1998.

To our father, Nils William Olsson

We have known you Dad, as a remarkable person pursuing a higher purpose for a long time (in fact, all of our lives!). So we are pleased to have this opportunity to step back and recognize how special you have been in our lives. During this time we have seen you in many different ways. You have lived in various places. You have performed in different jobs. Despite the variety of locations and occupations, you have persisted with that one passion for discovering more about Swedish immigrant history.

As we understand it, you became interested in Swedish family history long before we were around. This interest just grew stronger and stronger, as you immersed yourself in the archives, as you spent hours viewing microfilms, as you typed at your desk the thousands of 5 x 8 cards of people's biographical histories.

As children we were told of our ancestors, where they had lived and what they had done. We took for granted everyone knew about their ancestors. As children we learned words like passenger lists, church records, archives, and microfilms as other children learned the words TV or potato chips. Again we assumed everyone knew these words. It was not until later that we realized how unusual this was.

Underneath the words of genealogy and the facts of ancestor research there lay a deeper teaching that you gave us: we learned about the meaning of concepts like devotion, persistence, and higher purpose. We saw the personal satisfaction and joy you expressed when you succeeded in discovering something about past generations that no one living knew. We learned about the love of discovery, to get to know something, to understand more about the world than you knew when you got up that morning.

We came to know what it means to be seriously engaged in research and learning. We came to appreciate what it takes to accomplish a task. It means to continue, in spite of hurdles and setbacks, by keeping the goal in mind, to succeed. We learned how much you loved what you did. Your persistence and continued devotion to furthering Swedish immigrant research have inspired us.

Throughout the years, we have realized how much our mother, your wife, Dagmar, helped. Dagmar always encouraged and supported your work. Her unfailing devotion to you and your research taught us how important is the commitment to others and to their interests. You have been one of Mother's higher purposes, a person she has been devoted to, and a source of joy.

Today in our "use and throw-away society," it is refreshing to see you bucking the system and digging into the past and being rewarded with the knowledge that is folded away in archives. It is encouraging to see you so passionate about your research, when so many others have little to be devoted to except their TV schedules, what the latest movies are, or what new music is playing.

You and Mother taught us, through your example, to be tenacious and devoted and persistent and to love what one does. Thank you both so very much.

Karna, Greg, and Chris Olsson

Nils William and Dagmar Olsson, Christmas 1998. Upper left: Nils William's parents, Albin and Mathilda Olsson. Middle: Nils William and Dagmar Olsson, 1940. Upper right: Dagmar's parents C. A. and Amanda Gavert. (Collage courtesy of Karna Olsson.)

When N.W.O. Was W.N.O.: Nils William Olsson's Early Literary and Journalistic Career to 1935

Philip J. Anderson*

For nearly six decades, anyone even remotely aware of Swedish America—its activities, organizations, and publications—has been conscious of the name Nils William Olsson, the one who H. Arnold Barton described fifteen years ago as "surely the most protean figure on the Swedish-American scene."[1] The *festschrift* presented to Dr. Olsson in 1984 on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday included a comprehensive bibliography of his writings (to that time), in which only two entries appeared before 1941. The first was a set of ten biographical essays in the four-volume *Swedish Element in America* (1931), edited by his North Park College professor E. Gustav Johnson and Eric G. Westman. The second was an article in the 7 July 1932 number of *Svenska Amerikanaren-Tribunen*.[2]

During a long and distinguished career as a scholar-diplomat, Nils William Olsson has authored numerous books and articles, and has edited several publications, perhaps most notably the *Swedish American Genealogist,* which he founded in 1981. What have remained virtually hidden, however, are the origins of it all, where and how the craft was first nurtured and applied, and when N.W.O. was known formally to all as William N. Olsson and to his friends as "Bill." This essay will recollect the years from 1929 to 1935, beginning with Bill Olsson's matriculation as a student at North Park College in Chicago and concluding with his editorship of the old and venerable *Veckobladet* (Minneapolis) during its final year of existence, 1934-35.

Early Influences

When Bill Olsson moved at age twenty from his family home near Pittsburgh to Chicago to attend college, there had already been many formative influences in his life, both in Sweden and the United States. Born in Seattle on 11 June 1909, Nils Wilhelm was the oldest of four children born to Nils Albin

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[1] H. Arnold Barton, "Preface," in "An Ancient Folk in a New Land: Essays in Honor of Nils William Olsson," *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 35 (1984), 187.

[2] "Nils William Olsson: A Bibliography of His Work," ibid., 322.

and Mathilda Olsson. Four months after the birth of their son Karl in 1913, Mathilda died of complications and Albin, a civil engineer with the Pacific Car and Foundry Company, was then transferred in early 1915 from Renton, Washington, to St. Petersburg, Russia. His young children—Nils (also known as Nisse), Agnes, Lillie, and Karl—remained with his parents on the farm in Killeberg, in the parish of Loshult in northern Skåne. In St. Petersburg, Albin met and married Elsa (Tora) Larsson, a young missionary to sailors, who served with *Svenska Missionsförbundet* (Swedish Mission Covenant Church).[3]

At Killeberg, the children were welcomed and loved by an extended family. Of significant influence was Cecilia, their paternal grandmother, who, though lacking in formal education and having been occupied with raising eight children, had read everything she could find, often in the wee hours of the morning by the light of a kerosene lamp. She introduced Nils and the others to the little village library in Killeberg, open only for two hours each Saturday evening. Politics, literature, and current affairs were among her keen interests, and she had a superb knowledge of family and local history.

From 1916 to 1918 the family was together in Russia. Because of deteriorating political and economic conditions, however, the Olssons returned to Sweden and settled briefly in Örebrö and then once again in the familiar surroundings of Killeberg. They remained there until 1922, when the family moved to the United States where Albin had gone ahead in 1920, finding employment in Sharon, Pennsylvania. In the post-war, heavily Irish-Catholic environment where they lived, the names Nils and Wilhelm were undoubtedly problematic, and William or Bill better suited the American culture. Here Nils William, now a young teenager, and his younger siblings learned English (Albin being the only one at home who knew the language), entered the public schools (Nils William, the first grade), and discovered the neighborhood lending library. The family's collection of books, though modest, contained in Nils William's words "the very best in world literature, history, and the fine arts."[4] The impact of this early exposure to Tegnér, Geijer, Lagerlöf, von Heidenstam, Runeberg, and Topelius is particularly evident in the future literary paths taken by both Nils William and Karl.

The Olsson family also became intensively involved in the Swedish Mission Covenant Church, first in Youngstown, Ohio (near Sharon), for three years and then in Pittsburgh. In addition to experiences in congregational life, their home was visited frequently by Covenant pastors, educators, and

[3] For an account of this period of time, see Nils William Olsson, "Karl Olsson's *Ahnentafel,*" in *Amicus Dei: Essays on Faith and Friendship. Presented to Karl A. Olsson on his 75th Birthday*, ed. Philip J. Anderson (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1988), 12-22.
[4] Ibid., 14.

missionaries. It was an industrious, disciplined household full of ideas and religiosity. Nils William has recounted that while his father was profoundly anticlerical in his sentiments, he was "born to preach" and thought deeply about matters of faith. Moreover, among his papers "we have found hundreds, if not thousands, of pieces of paper upon which Dad had expressed opinions on all aspects of human existence."[5] In 1927 the family attended the Covenant's conference grounds on New York's Lake Chautauqua for the first time, and there the network of the regional and national church broadened, including an awareness of North Park College. Through the influence of Isaac Skoog, his pastor in Pittsburgh, William N. Olsson set off for Chicago in 1929.

North Park

During the early Depression years between 1929 and 1931 when Nils William studied at North Park, the school comprised a junior college, an academy, and a seminary. Founded by the Covenant Church in 1891, and meager in resources, it had moved from Minneapolis to Chicago in 1894. The junior college had only gotten off the ground successfully in 1919, but within the decade it had become a quality institution with a quite remarkable collection of students and faculty. This is especially evident in the publications of the period; Nils William became involved in all of them.

Bill Olsson was a reporter for the *North Park College News* for two years, a weekly paper that reported fully on campus life with creativity, substance, and humor. As a staff sports reporter with special responsibilities for men's intramural athletics, among other duties, he worked alongside new friends, some of whom, such as Paul H. Elmen and Harold W. Jacobson, would be lifelong colleagues. His first contribution appeared on 11 October 1929 in a column entitled "The Inquiring Reporter," where he urged students to become actively involved in intramurals, as athletes or loyal observers, to enjoy the "hectic spectacle, full of vim and pep." His coverage of events was graphic, suspenseful, and humorous.[6]

In the spring of his senior year, "W.N.O." wrote a piece for the column "Loafin' Aroun'," where he described a Washington's birthday excursion with a friend by elevated train to Chicago's unique marketplace, Maxwell Street. Entitled, "The Ghetto," it captured the frenzy and excitement of the characters, vendors, sideshows, and aggressive dickering on sales. It also marveled at the

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[5] Ibid.

[6] *North Park College News,* 11 October 1929, 3. Copies of the newspaper may be found in the North Park University Archives, Chicago, Illinois.

multicultural diversity represented by Gypsies, Jews, African Americans, Mexicans, and other ethnic groups in a city fashioned by immigrant workers.[7]

The college newspaper also covered aspects of campus life that were central in Nils William's experience: life in "Dormville," where the men lived—in conscious relation to activities in the resident female Caroline Hall; news from the dining hall, where Bill Olsson worked three meals a day; and activities of the numerous societies and clubs. Among his extracurricular involvements, Nils William naturally was involved in the Scandinavian literary group, *Geijerföreningen,* serving both as president and "critic." In March 1931, the society hosted Jakob Bonggren, the foremost poet among Swedish Americans and involved with the Chicago-based paper *Svenska Amerikanaren* since 1883.[8] He was also secretary of the men's Glee Club, and when it toured the Midwest in May 1930, extensive coverage was provided because "the group got the idea that what happens on the tour is deserving of being recorded by a historian." The chorus elected Philip Liljengren historian, and "Bill Olsson, the Smoky City lad, got the job of assistant."[9] The group visited several Swedish-American historical sites along the way, and in Topeka, Kansas, "Bill Olson [*sic*], it is said, got real dizzy climbing the circular staircases of the state capitol building."[10]

During his senior year, Nils William was president of his class and associate editor of North Park's yearbook, *The Cupola,* with Paul Elmen as editor-in-chief. In the photographs, Nils William's customary bow tie is to be seen under a moustacheless face topped by a full crop of dark hair. The yearbook is also graced by the photographs of a college freshman, Dagmar Gavert, later to become Nils William's partner in life. Next to the senior picture of William N. Olsson of Bellevue, Pennsylvania, were the prophetic words: "For Bill it is always 'spring.' He's always going some place or doing something in a big hurry—he's activity itself. However, not without motive, all this 'springing'. . ."[11]

In early 1930, a group of students that included Nils William launched a literary society for poets that lasted until 1969. Known as the Pegasus Club, it also began a publication entitled *Pegasus;* the first yearly issue appeared in May 1930 with cover art created by Warner Sallman. It was not until his eighteen-year-old brother Karl arrived on campus in the fall of 1931 that Nils William, now a student at Northwestern University, published his own poetry in *Pegasus.*

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[7] Ibid., 11 March 1931, 4.
[8] Ibid., 25 March 1931, 1.
[9] Ibid., 16 May 1930, 1.
[10] Ibid., 3 June 1930, 5.
[11] *The Cupola: The Official Publication of the Graduating Class of North Park College* (Chicago: North Park College, 1931), 42. Copies of the publication may be found in the North Park University Archives, Chicago, Illinois.

He has said laughingly that the brief and fleeting moments of inspiration to write poetry were caused (and not without a touch of envy) by the highly gifted and prolific writings of his younger brother.[12] Two examples are to be found in *Pegasus,* the first in the May 1932 volume, written under the pen name Nils Falkyng:

REKVIEM

Ute där värlstormar ryta sitt hån,
fjärran från hemlandets ro,
förglömt bakom skogiga kullarnas bryn
står gammalt nybyggarebo.

Gläntan i skogen är allt som är kvar
av fallen banbrytaregård.
Gräsbevuxt kulle nu gömmer dens stoft
som kämpade striden hård.

Granarna sucka sin kvädesång
på vakt kring mosskatafalk.
Nynnande näcken i rännilen blå
tömmer sin sorgekalk.

Ej var man som spångar det gapande djup
kämpar tills brädden är nådd;
ej var man som hugger sig obanad mark
skördar av strävandets sådd.[13]

Karl, whose pen name was *Carolavi,* also had four English-language poems in the issue.

When Nils William eventually returned to North Park in 1937-38 as an admissions counselor and instructor in Swedish, he resumed his activity in *Pegasus,* along with Karl and Paul Elmen (both of whom were teaching English), and continued even after he began doctoral studies at the University of Chicago in 1939. By 1942, all were in military service and off the roster of the Pegasus Club. One additional poem, however, was published under the name William N. Olsson in 1939:

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[12] Nils William Olsson, interview by author, tape recording, Winter Park, Florida, 13 November 1997.
[13] *Pegasus* 3 (1932), 10.

SPANNMÅLSBÖRS

Skrän och hysteriska röster
stiga från cirkelestrad,
packad med människorester
från en själslig krevad.

En nero vickar sin tumme
en annan gillar hans bud;
språket förstås av den stumme;
i vrålet drunknar allt ljud.

Högt över Michigans stränder
ilar budet från morsefusiljär
Nu trycks osynliga händer
över lumpen judasaffär.

Snart ljuder gonggongen i salen
majskungen blir sen till sin golf,
men ute i Platteriverdalen
har farmklockan slagit tolv.

Vid slutet av dagens möda
går bonden trött till sitt tjäll,
han äger ej längre sin gröda—
den tillhör den rike i kväll.[14]

This new poem appeared in a special tenth anniversary issue of *Pegasus*. The first half was a collection of poems published during the first decade, chosen according to a "standard of excellence" by a committee composed of Dean Samuel A. Wallgren and English instructors E. Gustav Johnson and Paul Elmen. "REKVIEM" was one of the poems selected.

Veckobladet

The years studying and teaching at North Park College were naturally reflective of a subculture shaped by the Covenant Church and the common experiences of a youthful second generation bridging the transitions, sometimes painful, within an aging immigrant community. The next phase of William N. Olsson's journalistic career would draw those dynamics in sharp relief. Nils William remembers:

[14] Ibid., 10 (1939), 47.

> It was in January or February 1934, when I was a student at Northwestern and Karl was associate pastor at the First Covenant Church in St. Paul, under the tutelage of A. E. Palmquist, that I received a telegram from Palmquist (then chairman of the board of *Veckobladet*) asking me if I would be interested in taking over the editorship of *Veckobladet,* now that Andrew Johnson ("Åkerbrukaren") was retiring. Salary—$25.00 per week. I was broke since I could not afford the costs for the spring semester at NU and I was bored with school. The promise of a new vista and the opportunity of rooming with Karl were incentives, which also caused me to drop out of school. It never bothered me that *Veckobladet* was in the hole to the tune of $17,000. I did not receive my promised salary until the paper went into bankruptcy in the spring of 1935, when by law employees were the first to be paid in a bankruptcy case. I approached the task with all the vigor of a young calf let out to pasture in the spring.[15]

The paper was begun in the autumn of 1884 by the entrepreneurial pastor-evangelist Erik August Skogsbergh to be an independent, unofficial publication of the regional Northwestern Missionary Association, formed a few weeks earlier on 27 October at Salem (Pennock) in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, four months prior to the organization of the Covenant Church itself. *Svenska Kristna Härolden,* as it was known until October 1887, when it became *Minneapolis Veckoblad,* was a weekly "devoted to religion and general intelligence." Its masthead proclaimed that it was a Christian and political newspaper for the Swedes in America.[16] Though regional in its base, for a half-century its presence in Covenant congregations and work extended to an influential role in the life of the denomination and a national readership. In February 1906, the name was again changed to *Veckobladet.* The paper was part of a publishing company, governed by a board of directors, which also operated a bookstore and published other papers such as *Linnea* (for young people) and *Söndagsskol-vännen* (for children).[17]

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[15] Nils William Olsson, letter to author, 30 December 1998.

[16] For a discussion of the foundation of the Northwest Conference and the context for the paper's half-century existence, see Philip J. Anderson, *A Precious Heritage: A Century of Mission in the Northwest 1884-1984* (Minneapolis: The Northwest Conference, 1984), 31-4; 38f.; and *passim.* The first issue of *Svenska Kristna Härolden* is usually given as 17 December 1884, because it was volume one, number one. There was, however, a full sixteen-page issue that preceded it, distributed free to advertise the paper and gather subscriptions. Described as a "Profnummer," it was dated 26 November 1884.

[17] Three MS minute books of the board of directors of Minneapolis Veckoblad Publishing Company are extant in the Covenant Archives and Historical Library, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois. They cover the following periods: 1895-1903; 1903-1907; and 1907-1923. Unfortunately, the minute book(s) covering the period up to the dissolution of the company in the spring of 1935 have not been located.

Skogsbergh edited the newspaper until 1899, an amazing accomplishment in light of his many involvements and a preaching schedule that kept him away from Minneapolis several months a year. He was succeeded by the aforementioned Andrew Johnson, who edited the paper in his first stint until 1901, who in turn was followed by K. Newquist, Nils Heiner, Gustaf Frykman, Hjalmar Sundquist, Erik Wallgren, and David Marcelius. David F. Swenson, professor of philosophy at the University of Minnesota and pioneer Kierkegaard scholar, also served for a time. All this was before 1910, when Erik Dahlhielm grasped the reins and remained until 1930, at which time in retirement Andrew Johnson returned again until March 1934. The paper also benefited from general managers S. A. Matson, K. Waller, and attorney Olof Bruce. The hymnwriter and publisher A. L. Skoog served many years as secretary, keeping the minutes in English, and Aaron Carlson, owner of a prosperous millwork company in northeast Minneapolis, volunteered his support for almost a half-century, time and again rescuing the struggling business by his financial generosity and acumen.

The newspaper had its beginnings in the little mission house on Fourth Street and Eighth Avenue, moving in 1886 to the basement of Skogsbergh's Tabernacle where it remained until 1904. For the next thirty years, it occupied several different commercial locations in downtown Minneapolis, including the *Minneapolis Daily News* building where for years *Veckobladet* was printed. In the early days it had been printed by the *Minneapolis Tribune.* Wherever the offices were located, the publishing company had been a place for Covenant clergy and laity daily to gather, drink coffee, and discuss the pressing issues of the day.

When Nils William arrived in Minneapolis to take the helm, the office was in the building of the Norwegian paper *Tidende,* which now did the printing of *Veckobladet.* Nils William produced his first issue on 13 March 1934, and Andrew Johnson remained as co-editor for two weeks until after his retirement party. He was fêted in grand style at the Curtis Hotel prior to sailing on the *Gripsholm,* at age seventy-four, with his new wife to live out their days in his native Dalsland. The 27 March issue gave an accounting of Johnson's farewell and included an introduction of the new editor by David Nyvall, brother-in-law of Skogsbergh, beloved president emeritus of North Park, and a regular contributor to *Veckobladet.* He wrote that William Olsson "is of Mission Friend stock," and added:

> He maintains a balanced interest in Swedish-American culture and history, but is especially interested in Covenant work. He brings to his new duties experience gleaned from journalistic enterprises while at school and college as well as an appreciation of the varying needs among young and old people

> of the denomination. Since 1930 he has been instrumental in the publication of daily newssheets at our young people's summer conferences.[18]

Olof Bruce noted perceptively in his remarks at Johnson's farewell that Olsson's arrival was "a challenge to the entire personnel for a progressive and persistent attitude and for unbounded energy." It was no secret that the newspaper was on the ropes financially; and the new editor—the "young calf"—was three months shy of twenty-five.

Veckobladet was a sixteen-page weekly, half in Swedish, half in English, and it immediately had a new look. "I changed the format of the paper going for a tabloid size and introduced modern fonts, changed the logo and went for short snappy columns. It was not appreciated."[19] The font on the masthead had a much more modern, yet Nordic, look about it and contained these words under the bold *VECKOBLADET:* "English section published in the interests of the young people of the Northwest." Contributing editors bridged the old and the new: Gustaf F. Johnson and David Nyvall, Karl A. Olsson and Paul Elmen. Continuity was provided by Johnson's front-page weekly column, "Tidens gång." The fundamentalist pastor of the Swedish Tabernacle in Minneapolis, Johnson had often been critical of the Covenant Church, but had a selective and somewhat large base of popular support in the area. In general Nils William and Johnson got on well, but over time the veteran preacher would prove to make life somewhat difficult for the new editor and his younger fellow writers. Nyvall provided faithful encouragement and continued to write a regular column on the past and the present; and Paul Elmen's father, John (pastor in Buffalo, Minnesota), wrote regularly in the Swedish section. The paper maintained its coverage of Swedish provincial news as well as *Svenska Missionsförbundet.* Reports of activities in the area churches were written in English.

The greatest innovation occurred in the English section. Nils William's brother Karl wrote a literary review column entitled "From Our Bookstall," with reference mostly to religious publications, but also timely secular literature. Karl Olsson would also be a lightning rod for the critics. In his first column, he wrote: "This column is not an advertisement. It is designed for those whose controlled passion is books, who believe that reading thoughtfully is the best discipline of the mind."[20]

In his first feature called "Our Covenant," Paul Elmen inaugurated a series that focused specifically on the concerns of second-generation Covenanters. For

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[18] *Veckobladet,* 27 March 1934, 12. Extant copies of these newssheets may be found in the Covenant Archives.

[19] Nils William Olsson, letter to author, 30 December 1998.

[20] *Veckobladet,* 13 March 1934, 8.

the previous decade, the Covenant had endured intense controversy over its theology, seminary, and teachers at North Park, and *Veckobladet* had contained its share of polemical news—such as in 1925 when David Nyvall wrote a twelve-part series during the Scopes Trial in Tennessee on the teaching of evolutionary theory, and Gustaf Johnson countered with thundering opposition. "We have a growing conviction," wrote Elmen, "that what the Covenant needs most of all are fewer battles between men who are *not quite alike in their religion,* and more battles with men who are *not religious at all.*"[21]

In retrospect, it was quite an accomplishment under these circumstances to edit and publish a high quality newspaper, where apart from the regular columns, according to Nils William, "I had to do a lot of writing to fill 16 pages every week."[22] He introduced at the outset a feature in Swedish under the heading "Jorden runt på fem minuter." In staccato paragraphs, Bill Olsson covered the world's news each week. Week one: Vienna, Berlin, Moscow, Trinidad, Rio, Mendoza, and Washington. Week two: Paris, Athens, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Dublin, and Bowsman (Manitoba). And so on. After a few weeks of this, he "received an irate letter from a subscriber, who said he got dizzy from the speed and wanted to get off. I must have irritated a few with my innovations, but took it philosophically."[23]

In September 1934, Nils William printed a two-part report entitled "Till Österland vill jag fara," describing his summer train journey to points east. In Chicago he visited North Park and Northwestern, and heard the Chicago Symphony perform Wagner. Before arriving home in Pittsburgh, he heard the Detroit Symphony. From there it was on to "the Swedish Mecca," Jamestown, where he heard Gustaf Johnson address the Eastern Young People's Society at Chautauqua.[24]

References to the secular arts were indicative of the broadening of *Veckobladet* under Bill Olsson's leadership, and were reflective of something of a culture war between many in the first and second generations. Just the previous month, Johnson had stormed into the office and angrily resigned his column because the editor had printed a review of the popular secular play "Green Pastures."[25] While the paper had strong general support from readers, some continued to grumble because of perceived accommodations to the world. Shortly before the paper ceased, Karl Olsson was criticized for his appreciative review of the Norwegian Herman Wildenvey's poems under the title *Owls to*

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[21] Ibid., 9.
[22] Nils William Olsson, letter to author, 30 December 1998.
[23] Ibid.
[24] *Veckobladet,* 4 September 1934, 3; 11 September, 1934, 3.
[25] Ibid., 14 August 1934, 4; Nils William Olsson, letter to author, 30 December 1998.

Athens. Words like the following were new to narrowly pietistic readers of the paper:

> Wildenvey is a Hellene, a happy notary in that rude temple of Pan, which is his native Norway. The poems are wine from this grape; they laugh, wail and sing nature. At times they cough with the plaintive voice of many young trees under the blue rim of the circle. But the tone is predominantly glad—sun-glad, and as exultant as a spirit-slave with his shackles struck.[26]

In the end, there were two issues that contributed to the paper's demise in the spring of 1935. The first, and more secondary, problem was that of language. *Veckobladet* was not alone among Swedish-American papers attempting to make the same transition. In the first issue printed under Nils William's editorship, a resolution was printed that had been passed by the Twin City Ministerial Association approving of the equal use of English. "It is apparent that if we are to retain the interest and cooperation of our young people in our churches and religious activities," the rationale stated, "we must see to it that a weekly paper be published in the English language, and we must interest our young people in subscribing to and reading such a publication."[27] Nils William Olsson was admirably suited to bridge the two worlds of language in creative ways. He, along with his contemporaries Karl Olsson and Paul Elmen, was committed to maintaining the use of the Swedish language and together they lamented its loss while being realistic about the future.

The most pressing problem was the lack of money. It was the Depression, and readers—be they drawn to Swedish or English—still needed to subscribe and pay. The paper had had a long history of financial challenges; a significant one had occurred in 1905 when *Linnea* was folded into the larger paper and severe steps of "retrenchment, rigid economy, and centralization" occurred because of a $3,400 indebtedness.[28] By the summer of 1934, Bill Olsson and his editorial board were addressing the crisis head-on. In July a full-page advertisement was developed offering "A New Deal." Since most Covenanters at that time were ardent Republicans, one wonders how the F.D.R. image was received. "*Veckobladet: Your* Paper About *Your* Work." "At Your Service." "Make *Veckobladet* a family paper. Swedish and English sections together sold

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[26] *Veckobladet*, 5 February 1935, 5.

[27] Ibid., 13 March 1934, 6. Karl Olsson noted in his column on 18 September 1934, 8: "A notice is given me from the Book Store that Swedish books are selling at reduced prices. As everywhere among our people the Swedish language is losing its grip. One senses the pathos of it."

[28] Minute Book of the Minneapolis Veckoblad Publishing Company [1887-1906], 13 February 1905, 84; 9 March 1905, 86ff.; 31 March 1905, 92f.

regularly for $2.00—Offered to new subscribers for $1.50 until October 1." These words surrounded cartoon images of the paper.[29]

A campaign was announced in August to promote the introductory subscription rates and the sale of capital stock.[30] The publishing company had always been a business venture to raise capital and benefit its stockholders. Some like A. L. Skoog, to whom the company had frequently owed money, simply kept taking additional shares instead. In September, two area congregations promoted the paper through women's organizations: the Ladies' Aid of the Camden church in North Minneapolis; and the Tabitha Society of the Tabernacle in Minneapolis, headed by Jean Hagstrum's mother, Mrs. Andrew Hagstrum. It was also advertised that one could now subscribe only to the English section of the paper at $1.00 per year.[31]

Paid advertising was also a challenge for the editorial team during the Depression. As mainstay advertisers felt the pinch, Bill Olsson was successful in the fall of 1934 in attracting non-Scandinavian commercial interests, and being an election year, numerous political ads were run until early November. These efforts were not enough. By November *Veckobladet* had been cut back from sixteen pages to eight pages. The only exception was the 11 December sixteen-page issue that commemorated in grand style the fiftieth anniversary of the paper.

"In the final analysis," according to Nils William, "it was finances that killed the paper" in March 1935.[32] Apart from the reduced number of pages, *Veckobladet* hardly died with a whimper. To the very end, it was a quality newspaper, professionally produced, and even in changing times, it knew its audience. The innovations during the last year were done with great class, and on the part of its editor, William N. Olsson, demonstrated already a keen knowledge of the business and the art, helping set the stage for Nils William Olsson's unique and multifaceted contribution to the Scandinavian countries, the United States, and Swedish America.

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[29] *Veckobladet,* 17 July 1934, 12; and successive weeks.
[30] Ibid., 14 August 1934, 7.
[31] Ibid., 11 September 1934, 10; 25 September 1934, 12.
[32] Nils William Olsson, letter to author, 30 December 1998.

Nils William Olsson's Diplomatic Career

Eric R. Lund*

Nils William Olsson retired from the State Department in 1967 after a seventeen-year career as a diplomat. Ten years later, in 1977, leading political figures including Vice President Walter Mondale believed he would be a good choice for Ambassador to Sweden. "But," Olsson recalled recently, "it was not to be."[1]

United States relations with Sweden had been severely strained by the Vietnam War, which Swedes opposed, and at one point the U.S. withdrew its ambassador for an extended period. Appointment of Olsson, well known and liked in Sweden, might have done much to ease tensions. Newly elected presidents with ambassadors to name, however, are more likely to choose a political ally than a career diplomat or person with exceptional knowledge of a country. Jimmy Carter in 1977 was no exception. Rather than name someone with special skills in dealing with the Swedes, Carter selected an early campaign supporter.

A behind-the-scenes campaign to name Olsson had been initiated by a Washington reporter, Lee Egerstrom, of the *St. Paul Dispatch.* Egerstrom knew Olsson from Minneapolis and felt he was especially well qualified to be the U.S. ambassador. His credentials included not only State Department experience in Iceland, Sweden, and Norway, but seven years living in Sweden as a child, two years in Stockholm as an intelligence officer during World War II, and a Ph.D. and teaching experience in Scandinavian languages at the University of Chicago.

Egerstrom's campaign won the support of Mondale and Minnesota's two senators, former Vice President Hubert Humphrey and former Governor Wendell Anderson. Humphrey called Olsson "an exceptional individual with an outstanding career." But by April, newspapers here and in Sweden were reporting the choice would be a Carter ally. Egerstrom's story in the *Dispatch,*

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[1] Nils William Olsson (hereafter NWO), letter to author, 14 August 1998.

spread across eight columns, was headlined "Envoy to Sweden may not be Mondale, HHH choice."[2]

Sweden, 1915-1922

Nils William Olsson's knowledge of Sweden began as a six-year-old in 1915, when his widower father brought the family—Nils William, his younger brother Karl, and two sisters[3]—to live in Skåne with their grandparents while he went on to a post in Russia with the Pacific Car and Foundry Company of Renton, Washington. In Russia, the father met and married a Swedish (now Evangelical) Covenant missionary, and the family was reunited there briefly, until events preceding the Russian revolution forced the children and their stepmother to return to Sweden. They lived in Örebro and then Skåne again before leaving for the United States in 1922.[4]

The years of their residency in Sweden were years of world war and economic hardship. The first two years of World War I, 1914-16, had been times of prosperity in Sweden. Prevailing public sentiment, beginning with King Gustav V, was pro-German, and "having relatives in America was a negative."[5] Some even advocated entering the war on Germany's side. But in 1917 food became scarce and after the worst harvest since the 1860s, conditions rapidly deteriorated. Even potatoes were rationed, and Olsson recalls subsisting in Skåne on rutabagas. He also remembers being taunted by classmates with the nickname *"Amerikansk fläsk,"* a reference to rancid canned pork shipped from the United States.[6]

Nils William was thirteen when he returned to America. Despite two long periods in Skåne, he came back speaking the middle Swedish of Närke province and Örebro, described as a "somewhat unlovely dialect" with a "light nasal quality."[7] He completed his early education in Pittsburgh and in 1929 left for Chicago to enroll at North Park College, where he met his wife, Dagmar Gavert.

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[2] *St. Paul Dispatch*, 2 April 1977.

[3] The Olsson children were born in Seattle, Washington.

[4] Carl Philip Anderson, "Karl A. Olsson: A Sketch of His Life," in *Amicus Dei: Essays on Faith and Friendship, Presented to Karl A. Olsson on his 75th birthday*, ed. Philip J. Anderson (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1988).

[5] Unless otherwise indicated, this and subsequent quotations and recollections are from Nils William Olsson, tape-recorded interview with author, 14 November 1998.

[6] For more on Sweden during World War I, see T. K. Derry, *A History of Scandinavia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 303-9, and Franklin D. Scott, *Sweden: The Nation's History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 468-75.

[7] Wilhelm Odelberg, "Some Thoughts on NWO on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday," in "An Ancient Folk in a New Land: Essays in Honor of Nils William Olsson," ed. H. Arnold Barton, *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 35 (1984): 195-6.

Stockholm, 1943-1945

Olsson was a thirty-three-year-old Ph.D. student and assistant in the Department of Germanics at the University of Chicago in 1942 when he was called to active duty in World War II as a lieutenant (junior grade) in the Naval Reserve. Because of his fluency in Swedish, he was assigned to the American embassy in Stockholm where he served as an assistant naval attaché until 1945, when he was released from active duty as a lieutenant commander and returned to the University of Chicago as an instructor.

Olsson left St. Andrew's Air Force Base in Scotland for Stockholm in January 1943, crossing the North Sea in a blacked-out plane. When the plane reached the Swedish border, the lights went on and the pilot announced, "We're over Sweden." Because Stockholm was fogged in, they landed at Torslanda airport in Göteborg, which hadn't seen a foreign plane in two years. As the passengers stepped from the plane, in parachutes and life jackets, they were met by a hastily assembled group of Swedish Home Guards, ready to repel an invasion.

Stockholm in 1943, like Lisbon, was a center of intrigue. It was "an exciting city. Everything was going on. All the Allies and the Germans had offices." But there was little or no contact between the two. Restaurants frequented by Germans, like Ringbogen on Strandvägen, were off limits to Americans. Henry Hanson, third secretary and vice consul at the embassy from 1942-44, like Olsson, uses the word exciting in describing what it was like:

> For an American, life in Stockholm during the war was interesting and exciting. We were always aware that we were living in a small, neutral country practically surrounded by Germans and threatened by German aggression.[8] Thousands of Swedish reserves had been mobilized. Soldiers were everywhere, as were convoys of trucks, tanks, and artillery. Thousands of others belonged to the Home Guard, graying men too old for active service who guarded bridges and defense plants, and the Lotta Corps, women who served in the military in many capacities and thereby relieved men for service in combat units.
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> Food was strictly rationed and, while adequate, was short on fats, so even diplomats lost weight. Gasoline was reserved for the defense forces,

[8] In the fall of 1942, with 25 panzer divisions and 400,000 German troops in Norway, Hitler proposed to strike across central Sweden to Stockholm in the spring and occupy the capital. A German military estimate reckoned that, although the people were 80 to 90 percent pro-Allies, the Swedish officer corps was 70 percent pro-German and the commanding general, Olof Thörnell, both pro-German and defeatist, making a quick surrender possible. Events elsewhere, however, compelled the Germans to withdraw troops from Norway to other fronts. - Scott, *Sweden: The Nation's History,* 507-8.

> private autos were banned, and taxies and buses were equipped with charcoal burners for fuel. People relied on bicycles for transportation. Coal was imported, but was reserved for industry. Consequently, apartments and houses were heated with wood, and long tiers of wood lined the streets. Hot water was limited to the Saturday night bath.[9]

Trained in intelligence duties, Olsson had the job of interviewing Norwegian and Danish refugees and reporting any information they could provide about the location of German ships and submarines. This information was flown to England and transmitted for bombing runs. Dag Strömbäck, under whom he had studied at the University of Chicago, introduced him to his brother, Helge, head of the Swedish Navy. Olsson had dinner with him and at one point was invited to go on maneuvers with the Swedish fleet. But his superior, whom he suspected of jealousy, turned down the idea.

Swedish public opinion, unlike during World War I, was overwhelmingly pro-Allied Powers. Following the invasion and occupation of Denmark and Norway, threat to Sweden itself, and increasing reports of Nazi atrocities, the old favoritism toward Germany had all but disappeared. In the election of 21 September 1942, Nazi candidates fared badly. The German defeat at Stalingrad weeks after Olsson's arrival in 1943 persuaded the Swedes that Germany would lose the war, and finally the government terminated the agreement it had made early in the war permitting German troop transit across Sweden.[10]

When the war ended in 1945, Olsson returned to the U.S. and his studies at the University of Chicago, where his choice of Icelandic as a field of study would prove to be prophetic. After a year out organizing the Swedish Pioneer Centennial celebration of 1948, of which he was executive director, he received his Ph.D. in 1949 with a dissertation on the late medieval Icelandic saga, *Vidutan.*

Iceland, 1950-1952

He was an assistant professor at the University of Chicago in 1950 when he received a telephone call from Marshal W. S. Swan, whom he had gotten to know during the Swedish Pioneer Centennial celebration. Swan, who had joined the U.S. Information Service in Washington, said the man in charge of

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[9] Henry Hanson, Fairfax, VA, letter to author, 21 October 1998.

[10] For more on Sweden during World War II, see Derry, *History of Scandinavia,* 328-55; Scott, *Sweden: The Nation's History,* 503-9; Alexander Klein, *The Counterfeit Traitor* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1958), 10, 19; and Peter Young, ed., *The World Almanac of World War* II (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981). *Traitor* also was a 1962 film starring William Holden.

operations in Iceland had resigned in mid-term and wondered if Olsson was interested in replacing him. He was, and asked for a year's leave of absence from the University of Chicago. After a year he liked it so well he did not apply for an extension of the leave and went on to what was to be a seventeen-year career with the State Department.

The Olssons' introduction to their first assignment was not auspicious. They were in New York to board the *Gripsholm* for Gothenburg and from there go on to Reykjavik by way of Copenhagen. Nils William went in one cab full of baggage and his wife, Dagmar, went in another with the children. As they drove down 57th Street toward the pier, Dagmar's driver asked where she was going. When she answered Iceland, he braked, turned around and said, "You don't mean Iceland! I spent two years there and it was awful." This attitude was still prevalent during the Olssons' stay. "We had [bored] servicemen at Keflavik who made strings of 365 paper clips and each day would remove one to mark time," Nils William recalls.

For the Olssons, however, Iceland was a positive experience. "I think Iceland was the number one spot [of the three where they served], because we had come out of civilian life and a paltry sum of $280 a month to keep a family of five going, where we were forced to work extra to keep the ship afloat, and suddenly we had income twice that, with time to spend together as a family." As the plane circled the field, when they left two years later, "I looked at Dagmar and tears were streaming down her face."

The Olssons found the Icelanders "fine people, outgoing and friendly." But there was strong resentment, led by the Communist party, at the continued military presence of the Americans, whose withdrawal had been demanded immediately on conclusion of the war. Nils William's job as public affairs officer was to counter anti-U.S. sentiment through a program of student exchanges and American films and music. It also was to work with the American military in an effort to avoid any incidents. He recalls one instance in 1951 when Iceland was getting ready to observe the anniversary of its independence and the military public affairs officer suggested bringing in a destroyer to fire a salute. "I had all I could do to discourage him. [Can you imagine] what it would have been like to have a foreign frigate sail into the harbor and shoot off a salvo?"[11]

[11] For more on Iceland, see Derry, *History of Scandinavia*, 384.

Stockholm, 1952-1957

In 1952 the public affairs officer in Stockholm resigned suddenly and Olsson was sent there to replace him, forfeiting his vacation and going directly. Wilhelm Odelberg, in a 1984 article, summed up this phase of his friend's career:

> I assume that Nils William is regarded by his compatriots in the United States as a full-blooded American. In Sweden, it is hard not to think of him as thoroughly Swedish, despite the slightest, scarcely perceptible accent.... From 1952 to 1957, Nils William was public affairs officer and first secretary at the American Embassy in Stockholm. He was well familiar with the city and with Sweden as a whole. He was able easily to renew contacts with friends from earlier sojourns. Numerous new friends who shared his biographical and genealogical interests gathered at his and his wife Dagmar's hospitable home....
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> [His] principal task was to create contacts with contemporary Sweden. He moved with unfailing assurance at all levels of Swedish society and became a well-known figure at all occasions of an economic or cultural nature from Haparanda in the north to Ystad in the south.... Before he left, he was honored at a celebration on 30 January 1957 at the illustrious old restaurant, Gillet, in Stockholm, where he received a special testimonial of esteem from his Swedish friends. There is nothing wrong nowadays with cultural relations between the United States and Sweden, to be sure, but they have never been quite the same since Nils William left.[12]

On his return to the U.S., Olsson spent five years in Washington, first as public affairs adviser in the State Department's Scandinavian section, then as chief of aid to American-sponsored schools abroad. During this period, he resumed a leading role in the Swedish-American (then Swedish Pioneer) Historical Society, which he had helped bring into being in 1948. He initiated a flight program in 1960 and more than doubled membership before he left for another overseas assignment.

Norway, 1962-1966

In 1962 the Olssons packed their bags again and were off for Oslo, where Nils William served for four years, initially as embassy first secretary, then counselor for political affairs. "If I had to pick a country where we felt most at home, it would have to be Norway," he said last year. "The pace was slower, the

[12] Odelberg, "Some Thoughts on NWO," 196.

people were warm and immediate and enjoyed life. They would take a walk in the mountains rather than go shop. Entertaining was simple. In Sweden, you couldn't entertain unless you had a big dinner. When we came to Norway, it was simple—*aftens* [supper], with a few shrimp, a glass of wine, a piece of cheese. That was all you needed to have a good time."

Indiana University, 1966-1967

Olsson's last posting was as a visiting professor (diplomat in residence) at Indiana University in Bloomington during 1966-67. The Vietnam War was on and he was never really accepted by the faculty and students, who were largely opposed to the war. At the end of the year, he took early retirement from the State Department to get out from the burden of having to justify the war, which he privately opposed. ("I couldn't tell a lie [any longer].") It was in Bloomington that he completed work on his monumental *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York, 1820-1850,* which was published in 1967 by the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society.

Minneapolis, 1967-1973

Two years after leaving the State Department he was recognized by the Vasa Order in Sweden as its 1969 "Swedish-American of the Year." He was executive director of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis from 1967 until 1973, when he organized and became executive director of Swedish Council of America, the position he held when his name was advanced for ambassador. Despite the impressive support of Mondale, Humphrey, and Anderson, however, his name was not on the final list of five sent to Carter by the State Department. "The chap who brought home the bacon" was Rodney Kennedy-Minott, a University of California at Hayward professor of humanities who had befriended Carter in the early days of Carter's quest for the presidency. As a reward he was "given Stockholm, though he had asked for Copenhagen."

Kennedy-Minott served without distinction and returned home before the end of his term. In 1981 President Ronald Reagan nominated Franklin Forsberg, a Swedish-American publishing executive whose performance earned praise and the Vasa Order's designation as "Swedish-American of the Year" in 1986.

Nils William Olsson and His Circle in Sweden 1948-1957[+]

Wilhelm Odelberg[*]

On 11 June 1984 Nils William Olsson, hereinafter referred to as NWO, turned seventy-five. His birthday was celebrated in many ways by his many friends and colleagues, as befits a man who has made himself known not only as a linguist specializing in Icelandic, but also as a diplomat, a naval officer, and, thanks to his scholarly studies, one who had attracted the attention of all who share his interests.

An issue of *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly,* formerly *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*, appeared on his birthday emblazoned with a dedication to NWO: "An ancient folk in a new land." Amid the articles and essays mainly concerning Swedish-American personal histories, was a bibliography of NWO's authorship dating back to 1932.

The present writer contributed an article entitled "Some thoughts on Nils William Olsson," a rhapsodic attempt at a brief outline of his personal history, his interests, and his work.

In 1952 NWO was posted to the American embassy in Stockholm. The Swedish capital was in no way unfamiliar to him. As a young student during the Second World War, NWO had undergone the vigorous and somewhat bizarre training required in order to become a naval officer—a training, however, that took place on land and simulated both navigation and sea battles. This intensive course, concentrated into three months, would have taken four years under normal circumstances. Not only did NWO make the grade; his personal merits, which highly suited him for the diplomatic service, must have attracted the attention of the State Department and of the United States Naval Command, so the newly-commissioned lieutenant was sent to Stockholm as assistant naval attaché.

[+] This text was translated from the Swedish by Veronica Ralston.

[*] Dr. Wilhelm Odelberg, who worked variously at the Royal Library, as head librarian at Stockholm University, and at the library of the Royal Academy of Science, resides at Box 119, S-178 02, Drottningholm, Sweden.

By now NWO was not only a naval officer, he was also a man of learning and one well acquainted with Swedish society. To outsiders indeed, the extent of his knowledge of Swedish personal history and genealogy was a constant source of amazement. It was now, during his first period of time in Stockholm, in the mid-1940s, that he made many firm friends.

NWO's naval career, however, was short-lived. He returned to the USA and resumed his studies of the Icelandic language. In 1949 he defended his thesis on the late medieval *Vidutan* saga.

In 1952, after spending two years as a secretary at the American legation in Reykjavik, he returned to Stockholm as public affairs officer and first secretary. His main duties were now to make contacts in Swedish society as a whole. The social ease with which he moved in all walks of society soon made him a familiar figure at political and cultural events, from one end of the country to the other. On the eve of his returning to the State Department, after five years of service, his Stockholm friends arranged a farewell party for him at which he received a complimentary address signed by some one hundred of those closest to him. And although cultural relations between Sweden and the U.S. have always been both lively and good, it was said that nothing was ever quite the same after NWO had left the embassy. Five years later he returned to Scandinavia as counselor for political affairs at the embassy in Oslo. This position did not have the same cultural emphasis as the one in Stockholm, but NWO, as was his wont, soon made contact with the Norwegian genealogical and personal history organizations.

After his retirement he continued to make many visits to Sweden, sometimes as frequently as once a year, and most often as the leader of conducted tours for Americans seeking their Swedish roots. NWO's magistereal work, together with Erik Wikén, was entitled *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850* (1995).

I am sure there are many people who could testify to both the range and importance of his other initiatives and involvements. My main focus here, however, is on the years (1952-57) when he was cultural attaché in Stockholm. During his later visits, he would have opportunites to renew his contacts. Today, however, sad to say, only one out of his entire circle of friends from that time is still alive. And he is the writer of this article.

During those important years, NWO resided with his wife, Dagmar, in a villa in the northern suburb of Djursholm. They entertained generously and their hospitality was much appreciated, not only by those who shared NWO's interests in personal history, but by many, many more. I am now going to evoke

the guests who could have been arriving for one such dinner party, let us say, in the year 1954. At Östra Station, the terminus of the Djursholm line, we see some people gathering, all with the same destination in mind. Among them is a professor named Nils Ahnlund (1889-1957). We may consider him the grand old man of the party, a celebrity in his own right, and a member of the Swedish Academy. Ahnlund, a specialist on 17th century Sweden, is the author of an impressive array of books on the subject. He is also an often read contributor to *Svenska Dagbladet.* In December 1939 Finland had been invaded by the Soviet Union and, throughout the Second World War, Ahnlund had been deeply committed to the Finnish cause. The journey out to Djursholm may now begin.

Ahnlund and a certain Dr. Olof Jägerskiöld are engaged in vociferous conversation. Jägerskiöld, being of Finnish descent, shares Ahnlund's devotion to Finland. As head of a department at the Swedish National Archives, it has fallen to Jägerskiöld's lot to assist the microfilm company Rekolid, currently working for the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City, by filming any material that might induce Mormons to receive forefathers retroactively into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Another passenger on the narrow-gauge train out to Djursholm is Ahnlund's friend, Professor Torvald Höjer (1906-1962), a tall thin man with a bristly moustache. Höjer has recently succeeded in out-competing other highly prominent researchers in the bid for a professorship at Stockholms Högskola, later to become Stockholm University. Höjer is primarily known for his impressive three-volume monograph on King Karl XIV Johan, who prior to being invited by a majority of the 1810 to succeed to the Swedish throne, had been Marshal Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, Duke of Ponte Corvo. Höjer, too, had become a close friend of NWO's and greatly appreciated his Swedish-American research. Indeed, it was at Höjer's recommendation, amongst others, that NWO was elected to the post of foreign corresponding member of the Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities.

This most flattering election had, more particularly, been sponsored by the ethnographer and linguist professor Dag Strömbäck (1900-1978). Though not one of our guests on this particular occasion, Strömbäck is nonetheless another of NWO's good friends, and they too have many interests in common. Strömbäck had earlier been a senior lecturer in Icelandic philology at the Lund University and, later, in Uppsala. During the latter half of the 1930s, he had been visiting professor in Chicago. Strömbäck's main achievement had been as head of the Uppsala archives for dialectal research and ethnology, and as a professor at the Institute of Ethnology at Uppsala University.

Another of NWO's friends in the same university was Gösta Berg (1903-1993), a prominent figure in Swedish humanistic research. For many years Berg had been responsible for both the Nordic Museum and for Skansen, two of the most important museums in Sweden with respect to cultural history in its widest sense. Skansen, the open-air museum so well-known to all visitors, has been much enriched by Gösta Berg's personal enterprise and wide-ranging knowledge.

In his day, professor Bertil Broomé (1913-1980) had been the leading researcher in the field of Swedish personal history. He was head of the War Record Office in Stockholm, and his books and studies, written with true archival sensitivity, were highly regarded, as was his monumental work, *Handskriftssamlarna och de svenska arkiven 1700-1950* (1977), a survey of 1,000 such collectors of manuscripts. The book contains information as to the sources they—more or less scrupulously—had obtained them from and, furthermore, indicates which institutions these manuscripts had been donated to. This magnum opus is a standard work, indispensible to anyone wishing to study Swedish history in any depth. Another field of Bertil Broomé's achievements was as editor of *Personhistorisk Tidskrift (Journal of Swedish Biography),* a position held by more than one of NWO's friends.

Also present at the dinner party—for now we are out in Djursholm—is an elderly editor for *Personhistorisk Tidskrift*, professor Bengt Hildebrand (1893-1964), editor-in-chief of the successive installments of *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* (Swedish Dictionary of National Biography). By this time (and after many a crisis), the project, most ambitiously begun in 1918, had crawled as far as to the letter "F." During Hildebrand's period in office, however, the publication had noticeably accelerated, although he had found it harder to cope with its finances, and the project had had to be nationalized. At this time of writing (1998), it has gotten as far as the letter "R." Hildebrand's most excellent essays and dissertations had made him known as the foremost expert on personal history, an acknowledged reputation passed on to Broomé. Bengt Hildebrand arrives in Djursholm by taxi. "The Dictionary's paying," he jokes in his southern Swedish accent.

NWO receives his guests at the little railway stop, and offers the more elderly of the party a ride to his villa in his big American car. The others walk. Among the most elderly is a venerable gentleman, the diplomat Axel Paulin (1877-1956). In some ways, Paulin differs from the other guests. As a young man at the turn of the century, he had been one of the Swedish officers who had served in the Belgian Congo. From this he had gone on to become commercial attaché to a South American Republic and, thereafter, had held increasingly responsible positions in Argentina and Chile. Now, in his old age, Paulin is

dedicating himself to biographical research, focusing mainly on Swedes who had resided in the Latin-American countries. His large-scale publication *Svenska öden i sydamerika (Swedish Destinies in South America),* the result of many years' study, had appeared in 1951. It would come to be regarded as a standard reference work, almost as an encyclopeadia. At the time of this party, however, Paulin is completely absorbed in collecting material about a certain traveler, Emanuel Sundelius, self-benamed Edelhjärta ("Trueheart"), and his trips to America and Mexico in the 1820s. Paulin discovered that his true name and identity was the peculiar one of Waseurtz af Sandels. In an article in a California archive Waseurtz claims to have been the first to discover gold in the Sacramento Valley, thereby unleashing the Great Gold Rush. Unfortunately there is strong evidence of Sundelius having been an incorrigible mythomaniac, with a talent for making others believe his tall stories. As a dinner guest, Axel Paulin is a sociable enough person but incapable of talking about anything unrelated to his current passion. Many a silence in the grand halls of archives and libraries had been broken by Paulin's booming voice.

Åke Kromnow (1914-86), one day to be director of the National Archives, arrives in his own car. His passengers and fellow guests for the evening are Uno Willers (1911-1980) and Tore Tallroth (1912-1992), head of the Swedish Institute for Cultural Relations. Kromnow had quickly established himself as a capable archivist and historian. He had taken several far-sighted initiatives, in particular for the preservation and safe-keeping of commercial and industrial archives. When Uno Willers became head of the Royal Library, Kromnow succeeded him as head of division, head of the Foreign Office Archives, the Ciphers Office and the Courier Department. Kromnow and Willers had been the best of friends ever since the days when they both studied under professors Sven Tunberg (1882-1954) and Nils Ahnlund.

Willers had long been interested in NWO's research into the history of the Swedish emigration to the New World, and in 1967 had seen to it that the first edition of his *Swedish Passenger Arrivals* had been accepted into the Royal Library's *Acta Bibliothecae Regiae Stockholmiensis* series. Indeed, he supported NWO's research whenever he could. Tore Tallroth and his wife Märta, daughter of Johannes Hellner (1866-1947), one of Sweden's foreign ministers during the First World War, also came to figure among the inner circle of friends, partly on account of their involvement in American affairs, but mainly because of their charm and sincerity. Tore Tallroth had been secretary at the Swedish Institute when he had been appointed cultural attaché at the Swedish Embassy in Washington, followed by several years as consul-general in New York. Throughout these years, Tallroth and NWO had kept in touch and drawn on each other's knowledge.

The present writer, Wilhelm Odelberg (1918-) was also present on this particular occasion, and I should, therefore, add a few words about him. I am an historian and my 1954 doctoral thesis was on Swedish naval history at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. I have worked at several institutions of learning, among them the Royal Library, ending up as head librarian at Stockholm University, and at the library of the Royal Academy of Science. The first time I met NWO was in the Tallroths' home, during his second diplomatic representation of the United States in Stockholm. This first meeting would result in a long-lasting friendship between myself and the Olssons, one that has survived many decades.

During NWO's visits to Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s, Ulla and Bertil Broomé's home became a central point for him. So extensive was the hospitality offered here that one was likely to meet many friends, other than those who might ordinarily be encountered in a Djursholm villa, for instance, Allan Kastrup (1906-1991), another frequent visitor to Sweden. Kastrup had been a leader/writer on political affairs for the prominent liberal newspaper *Upsala Nya Tidning*. After his transfer to America as director of the Swedish-American News Exchange in 1943, he had written several works on Swedish-American affairs and conditions. Worthy of special mention is his considerable opus, *Swedish Heritage in America: The Swedish Element in America and American-Swedish Relations in their Historical Perspective*, published by the Swedish Council of America in 1975. Kastrup's old links with Uppsala and its academic world meant that he and NWO had more friends in common than those we have occasion to meet here in this Djursholm villa.

One of them, perhaps somewhat on the periphery compared with some of the others, was professor Edvard Thermaenius (1896-1965), who at Uppsala had published articles on modern Swedish political history, but who also taught at Lund, Gothenburg, and Stockholm universities. He was moreover a most capable editor-in-chief and political leader/writer on one of the Gothenburg dailies. Thermaenius was also a fine public speaker and expert on popular and adult education. He had taken on many official assignments. In his post as professor of political science, conservative by inclination, Thermaenius had found himself opposed by strong liberal forces. Alongside his work as publicist and at the university, he was much appreciated, above all, for his friendly and humoristic personality as a college teacher. His considerable physical bulk caused him to be known to his pupils as "Volvo"—i.e., "I roll along"—with due reference to the famous Swedish car of the same name.

Other friends who turn up later or are outside the inner circle but who deserve mention are Sten Carlsson (1917-1989) professor of history at Uppsala, who had come to share NWO's interests during his stay as visiting professor in

the USA, and Kjell Öberg (1913-), journalist, ambassador, and director-general of the Immigration Office.

Such, to the best of my knowledge, was NWO's circle of friends, most of them from academia. Well-informed as he is on so many topics, he is ardent and knowledgeable in debate on all of them, to which he contributes his incredible range of knowledge, such as had already transpired during the time when he edited genealogical journals, but also of most social conditions. Sometimes, when discussion of some touchy issue threatened to become too heated and run too high, NWO's perfect Swedish—he hadn't the trace of an accent—would enable him to forget his position so that he would have to declare: "Never forget I'm an American, body and soul!"

Nils William Olsson and his friends celebrating the sixtieth birthday of Professor Edvard Thermaenius in 1956. From left to right: Dag Strömbäck, Torvald Höjer, Gösta Berg, Edvard Thermaenius, Allan Kastrup, Nils William Olsson, Tore Tallroth, and Wilhelm Odelberg.

Nils William Olsson and the Royal Library, Stockholm

Folke Sandgren*

In connection with the three-hundred-year jubilee of the Royal Library in 1961, during the ominous days of September when Dag Hammarskjöld died in Africa, a new monograph series of the library was started—*Acta bibliothecae regiae Stockholmiensis*. In 1967 Nils William Olsson's extensive work, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850*, was published as number 6 of this series. Compared with other items of the series, it is an impressive work, both with regard to the size and the research work behind it. In any case, without knowing the author, a then-young assistant librarian working with Dr. Olof von Feilitzen at the department of acquisitions, now writing these lines thirty years later, had his eyes opened to a new world of research hitherto unknown to him.

Nils William, due to long stays in Stockholm as a U.S. government official, was a prominent figure of Stockholm academic life and a good friend of the National Librarian, Dr. Uno Willers, as well as my mentor, von Feilitzen, both now deceased. It is evident that these two gentlemen proposed to Nils William that his work be published in Sweden as part of the Acta-series. Upon the invitation of von Feilitzen, I had the pleasure to be introduced to Nils William and his wife, Dagmar, at a sumptuous dinner on the veranda of the Grand Hotel in Stockholm on a memorable summer evening in the early 1970s.

After the retirement of von Feilitzen in 1974, I was appointed by Uno Willers to be the de facto editor of our scientific series, and it came naturally to keep up the contact with Nils William. He was extremely kind to visit our library as soon as he put foot in Stockholm, and our meetings developed into an everlasting friendship. Although I have no personal lines with Swedish immigrants in the U.S., I was stimulated by my acquaintance with him to promote other research work in the area. Thus, when the well-known collector of Swedish-American prints in the U.S., Tell G. Dahllöf, announced that he wanted his collection to be catalogued, I persuaded my colleagues, Gunilla Larsson and Eva Tedenmyr, to make a professional description of Dahllöf's unique collection, which they did with grand gusto in their spare time. Even this work, when finished in 1988, was included in printed form as number 47 in the Acta-series. After the catalog was completed, the collection was sold by Dahllöf

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to the Wilson Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, much to the disappointment of myself and the catalogers, especially since several items of the Dahllöf collection were missing, and still are, in the Royal Library.

After 1967, Nils William continued to identify early Swedish immigrants to the U.S. and Canada. As a result of his continuing work, a second volume, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in U.S. Ports 1820-1850 (except New York),* was ready for publication in 1979. It appeared as number 32 in our Acta-series. But, apparently, this is a field of research where completeness and total correctness remain unattainable. It became clear to Nils William that both volumes had to be thoroughly revised, as new and supplementary information became available during the 1980s. A contract was established between Nils William and Dr. Erik Wikén in Sweden (born in 1905 and thus four years older than Nils William), a former professor of Latin and Greek at the secondary grammar school of Gävle, north of Stockholm at the threshold of Norrland. Wikén, more and more prone to immigration studies, offered his services to Nils William, which were accepted with gratitude on the other side of the Atlantic.

Wikén started to verify identifications of single immigrants in the vast Swedish archives and, thus, contributed considerably to the reliability and exactness of Nils William's work. It was decided that the two former volumes should be amalgamated into one single volume, which would totally supersede the two previous ones, and that the Royal Library, consequently, should take care of the publishing of the final volume. Wikén, in spite of his age, worked tirelessly as he traveled around in Sweden to different archives. He kept me continuously informed about the progress of his work, turning up now and then in my office at the Royal Library. At Nils William's place in Florida, letters from Wikén arrived without interruption. It was with the utmost pleasure that the three of us realized that the enormous work was going to be finalized and published in due order. On the title page, both Olsson and Wikén are listed as co-authors, which seems absolutely correct. The 618-page volume, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850,* was published in 1995 as number 55 of the Royal Library Acta-series. Sadly enough, Erik Wikén died in 1998. However, he had some time left to enjoy the volume and the appreciation of his work, both from Nils William personally and from all those who benefited from the completed work.

Nils Williams's achievements cannot be underestimated. There is still, in Sweden, a broad popular interest for the history of the emigration to the brave new world. He has laid a foundation stone and made up a model for future continued research work in this area. When the Royal Library was reopened after five years of work and re-inaugurated in June 1997, in the presence of His Majesty the King of Sweden, one of our dear honorary guests was Nils William.

Nils William Olsson: Father of Swedish Council of America

Roger F. Bauman*

The idea of an umbrella organization to unite all the disparate Swedish-American clubs, institutes, museums, societies, and associations was not new. Credit actually belongs to the late Vilas Johnson of Chicago, who was the chair of the Chicago chapter of the Swedish Pioneer Centennial in 1948.

Out of the pioneer observance evolved The Swedish Pioneer Historical Society (known today as The Swedish-American Historical Society. Johnson was serving as the Society's president, and he suggested to Nils William Olsson the concept of uniting the Pioneers with the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and the American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia to create a large national institution. Together they traveled to Minneapolis and Philadelphia, but came away unsuccessful.

The idea then lay dormant until 1957, when it sprouted anew under the leadership of then Swedish ambassador to Washington Gunnar Jarring. Nils William met occasionally to discuss Swedish-American cultural relations, which pointed up Sweden's frustrations with navigating a course among dozens of Swedish-American organizations, each with its own concerns. Johnson's idea was resurrected with high hopes, but Jarring was soon transferred to Moscow, the impetus was lost, and the idea for this project went into hibernation again.

Another ten years passed. The Swedish ambassador in Washington was now Hubert de Beche, and the idea was reawakened when the ambassador called a special conference in Washington. Representatives from various Swedish-American organizations were invited to discuss the umbrella idea at an all-day session. Nils William was by that time the director of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, and he attended as its representative. The result this time was a consensus that a national umbrella should be created.

As the meeting broke up, Ambassador de Beche called Nils William into his office and bluntly informed him that now that the decision was made, it was up to him (Nils William) to get the job done. "Get someone else to run the

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Institute," de Beche told him. "Your task is to implement the concept we have worked so hard to achieve."

After some considerable thought, Nils William accepted the challenge and resigned his post at ASI to begin the daunting task of welding together all the disparate Swedish groups from the four corners of the country under the umbrella of the new national organization. He likened his decision to that of leaving a battleship to climb into a rowboat on stormy waters.

Using his considerable talents and wide network of contacts, Nils William managed the process of creating the new organization. In the spring of 1972 he gathered representatives from the three aforementioned major Swedish American cultural institutions from Minneapolis, Chicago and Philadelphia for an informal session to find a formula that would appeal to a majority of Swedish-American organizations. Dr. Nils Y. Wessell, then president of the Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. Foundation in New York, who also represented the board of the Philadelphia museum, agreed to assume the presidency of the board of the fledgling organization. At the very next meeting, these three organizations were joined by the Detroit Swedish Council, and in May, 1972, Swedish Council of America was incorporated as a Minnesota non-profit corporation.

Nils William took the job as the first executive secretary of the organization, doing the day-to-day administration of the Council's business. Under his tireless leadership, the Council's activities increased and the membership grew to some fifty organizations by the mid-1980s, when Nils William "retired" and the Council hired Chris Olsson, his son, to take over the administrative duties as executive director.

The simple fact of the matter is this: it is primarily due to Nils William's tireless efforts over many years that Swedish Council came into being and grew steadily from its humble beginnings to the point where today it counts nearly 200 organizations as members and is truly the national Swedish-American umbrella.

Nils William Olsson: The Genealogist of Swedish America

Glen E. Brolander*

Of the many aspects of Nils William Olsson's activities in Swedish-American affairs, his interest in genealogy covers the longest time period and probably represents his greatest legacy. It began in 1934, when he received a letter from his grandfather in Sweden. This sparked his interest in researching his own family history and began his interest in genealogy, an interest that grew during early visits to Sweden.

During the years 1952 to 1957, while serving in the United States Foreign Service as Public Affairs Officer and First Secretary at the American Embassy in Stockholm, his biographical and genealogical interests expanded greatly as he realized the importance of these studies to the cultural relations between the two countries. His expertise was recognized as early as 1957, when he was elected foreign Corresponding Member of Sweden's Royal Academy of Belles Lettres, History and Antiquities.

It was also during this period that he started collecting books on Swedish history and related topics. This eventually led to a personal library of approximately 9,000 volumes.

Nils William soon became a resource for persons interested in their own family history. Beginning in 1958, he provided a regular section in the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* on "Personal Pioneer History." This section continued until 1980. In 1962, he wrote a definitive article for the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* on "Tracing Your Swedish Ancestry." This guide was then published by the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1965 and revised in 1974. Countless Americans of Swedish descent have used this little volume as they researched their own family history.

While in Stockholm, Nils William began a monumental project of tracing the origins and family relationships of the early Swedish immigrants from

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Sweden who arrived in American ports of entry. With enormous care and diligence, he examined more than 33,000 ships' manifests as well as information in Swedish archives to document the arrival of approximately 4,000 Swedes at the Port of New York during the period 1820-1850.

This study led to the publication in 1967 *of Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850.* His work was expanded in 1979 by the publication of a companion volume, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in U.S. Ports 1820-1850 except New York,* which identified 1,000 additional early Swedish arrivals. After continued research, a revision combining the two volumes, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850,* was published in 1995. This indispensable reference was co-authored by Nils William and Erik Wikén.

In 1981 Nils William fulfilled a long-held dream to develop a journal devoted to Swedish American genealogy. In that year, he founded the quarterly publication *Swedish American Genealogist* and served as its publisher and editor. This journal quickly became the leading publication for anyone interested in Swedish-American biography, personal history, or genealogy.

Swedish American Genealogist became a true labor of love for Nils William, and he personally wrote a large number of the articles. In 1992 the function of publisher was transferred to the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center. He continued as editor until January of 1998, when the editorial function was turned over to James E. Erickson. Nils William was then named Editor Emeritus.

In 1981 the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center was organized at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. Nils William took an immediate interest in what was to become the largest center in America for preservation and interpretation of records regarding Swedish immigrants. He became a charter member of the Advisory Committee, a position he continues to hold.

In 1986 he suggested that he might be interested in transferring his vast personal collection of Swedish-American books and files to the Swenson Center. The collection consists of over 4,000 volumes and is particularly strong in Swedish-American genealogy and local and regional history. The transfer was made possible partially by a gift from the Olssons and partially by contract purchase. The bulk of the collection was transferred in 1991, and cataloging was supported by grants from the Wallenberg Foundation.

Nils William's devotion to helping Americans of Swedish descent trace their family roots is further exemplified by the annual genealogical workshops that he has sponsored at the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City. He has led

these for eight years, beginning in 1991. He has also led genealogical trips to Europe and has lectured extensively on Swedish history and culture.

In 1994 Nils William presented the Sixth Annual Ander Lecture at the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center. He spoke on the topic "Naming Patterns Among Swedish-American." That same year, the Swedish Federation of Genealogical Societies presented its Victor Örnberg Award to him for his "outstanding work in emigration history, for his editing and publishing of *Swedish American Genealogist* and for his continued work in strengthening the ties between Sweden and the Swedes in America."

Even now, as he approaches his ninetieth birthday, he is engaged in another major project—identifying the 6,400 Swedish voters who were registered in Chicago in 1888.

Certainly there is no other person who has done more to identify the persons who were included in the Swedish migration to America and to assist Swedish Americans interested in knowing more about their Swedish ancestors or relatives. The results of his work will live on in the strong personal relationships that have developed between the United States and Sweden.

An Historian as Genealogist

H. Arnold Barton*

Most people who are attracted to genealogy from all walks of life are drawn to it by the desire to find out who they themselves are by learning who their ancestors were. I, too, became fascinated by my own family roots; but, when I began to track them down in the early 1970s, I was already a reasonably well-seasoned historian, with over a decade in the profession. I was, therefore, as anxious—if not more so—to seek out the ways in which the lives of my forebears reflected the broader historical developments taking place around them in both the Old World and the New as I was to learn their identities and the years and places where they were born and died.

My interest was particularly aroused when I moved, in 1970, from California to Illinois, close to places where my immigrant ancestors had first settled in America. This somehow made their story seem more relevant than it had been before. I set to work and continued over the next decade or more. It was a long and fascinating process. In the end it proved richly rewarding.

What did my search reveal about the times and places in which my Swedish forebears lived? Let us begin at the beginning. My paternal grandfather was born Ernst Otto Svensson in 1858 at Bullebo farm in Djursdala Parish, Kalmar County *(län)* in Småland and came to America with his family at the age of eight in 1867, when they settled on the unbroken Iowa prairie.

Ernst Otto was the eighth of the eleven children of the freehold farmer *(hemmansägare)* Sven Svensson, born in neighboring Södra Vi Parish, and his wife, Sara Maria Öhrn, born in nearby Odensvi Parish. Sven's ancestral farm lay in Loxbo village, Södra Vi, whose proprietors have been traced as far back as 1538, during the reign of Gustav Vasa. While there is some question about the earliest of these, the first who can be proven to have been our direct ancestor was established there by 1635, in the reign of Queen Christina.

Studying our forebears in that part of northeastern Småland from the earlier sixteenth century down to the mid-nineteenth century, when so many of them emigrated to the United States and found their place in American life, I found how their lives faithfully mirrored their times and the places where they lived. Obviously, I can give no more than a few examples here.

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What was perhaps most striking about the early proprietors at Loxbo was the impact of Sweden's many wars during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries upon the Swedish peasants. The tax rolls *(mantalslängder)* preserved at the War Archives *(Krigsarkivet)* in Stockholm reveal how, in 1570, Lasse at Loxbo had to contribute to the special levy for the first ransom of Älvsborg Fortress at the site of present-day Gothenburg, captured by the Danes during the Seven Years' War of the North (1563-70), and how Jon at Loxbo was assessed, in 1613-18, for the second ransom of the same fortress after the War of Kalmar with Denmark (1611-13). A successor, Jon at Loxbo, appears among the local militia in 1628-29, and as our ancestor, Carl at Loxbo, is shown as proprietor already in 1635, it is likely that Jon died in Gustav II Adolf's Baltic campaigning.

I was also struck by what the taxation rolls have to show regarding both the size and the legal status of the Loxbo farm. Its first proprietor, Per at Loxbo, is shown in 1538 to have possessed a full *mantal,* a fiscal unit varying in size according to its estimated productivity. As the generations passed, especially by the mid-nineteenth century, the proprietors held smaller and smaller parts of a *mantal.* This indicates the pressures of a growing population, as further shown by the rising prices for the same parcels of land that were bought and sold during the earlier nineteenth century. When my great-great-grandfather, Jonas Öhrn—Sara Maria's father—sold his one-fourth *mantal* in Odensvi Parish to go to America in 1851, he received 40% more for it than his father had paid for it only nineteen years earlier, in 1832.

Meanwhile, the status of Loxbo in Södra Vi Parish changed with changing conditions. Per at Loxbo held his *mantal* there as *skattejord,* or peasant freehold land, directly taxable by the Crown. During the seventeenth century, it came to be designated as *skattefrälsejord,* that is to say, the taxes it paid were turned over by the Crown to private persons, mainly the aristocratic owners of large estates, in repayment for loans or services. By the middle of the century there was a real danger that Swedish peasants, who had always been free men, might be reduced to some form of serfdom on the model of Denmark and the Baltic lands. This threat was averted by the Reduktion begun by Karl XI in 1680, by which the Crown reclaimed the lands and tax revenues that had been earlier granted to private persons. Freehold rights were then fully restored to those peasants who had lost them, including the proprietors at Loxbo. By the early nineteenth century, when restrictions on the purchase of privileged lands had been eased, some of their descendants were acquiring former noble manors. Among them was Sven Arvidsson, the father of Sven Svensson, who purchased Rumskulla Manor in nearby Rumskulla Parish for one of his sons. Later a grandson would buy Harg Manor in Kisa Parish, Östergötland.

The descendants of Carl at Loxbo in the seventeenth century were clearly doing well for themselves two centuries later, by the early nineteenth century. Sven Arvidsson became a local celebrity in Södra Vi, in time acquiring so much property that it was said he could wander through three adjoining parishes on his own land. But problems arose, in particular economic and religious. Many substantial farmers by mid-century, including my great-grandfather, Sven Svensson, who in 1841 became the master of Bullebo farm in Djursdala Parish, were beginning to see farming not simply as a traditional way of life but as a profitable enterprise. Sven had ambitious plans for improvements, causing him to borrow money during the prosperous 1850s, which became increasingly difficult to pay back during the hard-pressed 1860s. It undoubtedly became clear to him that he could only pay off his debts by selling part of his lands. But how, in that case, was he to provide for his eleven children in a manner considered worthy of a substantial farmer? At this point he began thinking seriously of America, where good land was said to be unlimited, at little or no cost, and where his father-in-law had already emigrated in 1851.

Religion, too, played its part. Sweden, during the earlier nineteenth century, was swept by waves of evangelistic pietism. It was a measure of the Svensson family's rise in social standing that their eldest son, Sven Fredrik, sought to prepare himself for the clergy. This was not easy for a peasant lad from outside the old, established clerical families. Sven Fredrik attended the Fjellstedt and later the Ahlberg schools for lay preachers and colporteurs, where many future Swedish-American pastors received their first preparation. Seeing little future in Sweden, he emigrated in 1866 to America to attend the budding Augustana Lutheran Seminary, then in Paxton, Illinois. He had meanwhile brought his family to "see the light" and during their later years there, Bullebo became known as a nest of pietism and conventicle meetings. To them, too, America came to offer the shining vision of freedom of conscience.

The family's scout was Sven's second son, Ludvig, who emigrated to America in 1864 and soon thereafter enlisted in the Union Army during the final stage of the Civil War. His motives were doubtless practical: to gain quick citizenship, thereby qualifying him to profit by the Homestead Law of 1862.

It has already been seen that the kin was early on the scene in America—how early I had no real conception when I first began my family research. I found that my great-grandmother's father, Jonas Öhrn, arrived in America already in 1851. It became more exciting still, when I was able to find that he had settled in New Sweden, in Jefferson County, Iowa, the first lasting Swedish settlement in the American Middle West, established by Peter Cassel and a small group from Kisa in Östergötland, only six years earlier, in 1845. But then, I discovered that even earlier relatives—at least by marriage and very

likely by blood—Peter and Christina Andersson, from Jonas Öhrn's Odensvi Parish, had joined the Cassel group in Gothenburg and were thus among the first New Sweden settlers! The Anderssons had apparently had no contact with the Cassel group from Kisa before leaving home, and had, in fact, taken out their passport in Kalmar a good two weeks earlier than the Kisa folk had taken out theirs in Linköping. For a descendant of the Great Swedish Migration, this was almost like discovering an ancestor on the *Mayflower!* It was there that the chain connecting our family in America with our kinfolk in Småland and Östergötland first began.

It should be added that after two years in New Sweden, in 1847, Peter and Christina Andersson led a small group of more recent arrivals, including Christina's brother, Anders Edvard Fagerström, fifty miles to the west, where they established the Bergholm colony (now Munterville), in Wapello County, Iowa, thereby beginning a process of stage migration that, over the years, would lead thousands of Swedes and their children to leave the older settlements for new ones farther to the west and north.

Both Jonas Öhrn in 1851 and Sven Svensson in 1867 were typical of the early Swedish peasant emigrants to America: they were substantial farmers with property to sell to pay for their families' travel to America and to purchase land and needed supplies there. Öhrn was, moreover, a good example of the remarkably rapid adaptation of many of the earliest Swedish immigrants to conditions in the new land. From the start, he proved himself a canny businessman. He bought and sold land in and around New Sweden, lent out money at interest, became one of the community's most substantial citizens and a pillar of its Methodist Church. More notable yet seems the case of Andrew Edward Fagerstrom—as he now called himself—who by 1878 farmed 220 acres, was married to a woman from Kentucky, had seven children, was a township trustee, treasurer of the school board, a Baptist, and a Democrat.

Cultural adaptation on the Iowa prairie was, however, generally more gradual. Sven Svensson, who emigrated at the age of fifty, is said never to have learned more than a little farm English, and his wife, Sara Maria, knew even less. They could get by well enough with Swedish in Lost Grove Township, Webster County, where they took land in 1867, amid their own countrymen. Language usage among their numerous children varied, as shown by their preserved letters, depending above all upon their ages when they arrived in America. Sven Fredrik, the eldest son who became an Augustana Lutheran pastor, mastered grammatical Swedish and evidently had at least a reasonably good command of English. While all the children could use Swedish throughout their lives, those in the middle never really learned it properly in school, nor did they ever learn very good English. The younger ones, including my grandfather,

Ernest, acquired proper English, thanks to better education and determination to get ahead in life.

Those of Sven and Sara Maria's children who married all took spouses either born in Sweden or of Swedish parents in America. Meanwhile three of them were able to obtain American college educations. My grandfather, for instance, after teaching school and living in a sod house for a time in newly settled Gothenburg, Nebraska, became a physician. According to family tradition, he took the name Barton out of admiration for Clara Barton, the American Angel of Mercy in the Civil War and later founder of the international Red Cross. The third generation married mainly outside their ethnic group and scattered well beyond the Middle West. Bit by bit, the family found its way into American life, but without losing its pride in its Swedish origins.

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If the Andersson-Öhrn-Svensson kin illustrate the progression from seventeenth-century peasant freeholders in northeastern Småland to prairie farmers in later nineteenth-century Iowa, the family background of my grandmother, Jenny Christina Charlotta Norelius, born at Lenninge farm in Lenninge village, Bollnäs Parish, Hälsingland (Gävleborg *län*) in 1863, illuminates developments in another part of Sweden and other strata in Swedish society.

Her father, Franz Gustaf Norelius, was the *häradsskrivare,* or district recorder, for the South Hälsingland Judicial District *(fögderi),* and thus was *herrskap,* a member of the gentry class. His family history, since the early eighteenth century, illustrates what the Swedish historian Sten Carlsson described in 1962 as the classic path of upward mobility in the old Sweden: from peasant to clergyman to state official *("bonde - präst - ämbetsman").*

In 1729, a peasant lad, Johan Ericksson, from Börstil Parish, near Östhammar in Uppland, went off to Uppsala University to prepare himself for a clerical career. He took the name Norelius, with the characteristic Latinized ending then preferred by the clergy, was ordained, and married Christina Unander, daughter of the pastor of the island parish of Vätö, near Norrälje in the northern Stockholm archipelago, whom he succeeded as pastor in 1745.

Although Johan Norelius lived out his life within the radius of some thirty miles in his native province of Uppland, his marriage brought ramifications stretching far out into the world. His brother-in-law, Eric Unander, served, from

1749 to 1760, as one of the Swedish State Church's pastors on the "American Mission" to the old Swedish Lutheran congregations along the Delaware River, which dated back to Sweden's short-lived overseas colony in the seventeenth century. He was thus, so far as I can tell, the very first of my kin to come to America. While there, he married Maria Hesselia, daughter of the Swedish-born Gustaf Hesselius, who is considered the first American artist of any consequence. A great-granddaughter of Gustaf Hesselius, incidentally, married the Swedish painter, Adolf Ulric Wertmüller, who in 1800 left an eminent career in Sweden and France to settle in New Jersey.

Another family relationship, meanwhile, linked the little parsonage by the Baltic to the fabulous lands of the East. Christina Unander had been courted by a young seaman from Vätö named Mattias Holmers, but she rejected him as she was already then engaged to Johan Norelius. Holmers sailed off to the Far East in the service of the Swedish East India Company, founded in Gothenburg in 1731, eventually becoming one of its most illustrious captains and very well off. Having lost Christina, Holmers in due course wooed and, at the age of fifty-eight, married her sixteen-year-old daughter. The couple is reputed to have lived happily together and they had several children, leaving numerous descendants.

Johan Norelius's son followed him as pastor at Vätö. While some of his grandsons settled in Dalarna—one of whose descendants was the well-known artist and illustrator, Eric Norelius—one became the district treasurer at Söderhamn in Hälsingland. His son, Franz Gustaf Norelius, in turn became the father of my grandmother Jenny in 1863, after settling in Bollnäs Parish, where he acquired Lenninge farm.

Franz Gustaf died in 1875, when Jenny was only eleven years old, and what she recalled as an idyllic childhood in Lenninge village suddenly came to an end. His widow, Anna, left in straitened circumstances, had to sell the farm. She moved with her four children, first to Uppsala, then to Stockholm, earning her living as a dressmaker. The latter move was evidently made for Jenny's sake, for she had developed a lovely soprano voice, which gained her admittance to the Royal Academy of Music in 1882. It was surely hoped that this would prepare the way for a successful operatic career that might repair the family's fortune.

Jenny nonetheless had to content herself for some years with teaching voice to young society ladies in Stockholm. She thus seized the chance, in 1889, to tour America with the "Swedish Ladies' Octette." In Omaha she met the young doctor, Ernest Svenson (Barton), and, according to family legend, it was love at first sight. They married in 1890 and moved to Portland, Oregon, where my father, Sven Hildor Barton, was born in 1892.

Jenny was soon joined in America by two of her four siblings, a brother and a sister. This circumstance is of interest in itself and, in my view, surely relates to the social standing of their parents. Franz Gustaf Norelius, as seen, belonged to the gentry. After coming to Lenninge farm, however, he was smitten by the lovely daughter of his farm manager *(rättare),* Anders Andersson Wiberg and his wife Anna Ersdotter, from neighboring Gästrikland province, who were of very humble origins indeed. In 1836, at the time of their daughter Anna's baptism, Anders is noted in the parish register as a *statdräng,* which would put him practically at the bottom of the old peasant society. In return for laboring on a farm, on a year's contract at a time, a *statare* or *statdräng* and his family were given some kind of minimal housing and, for the rest, mainly compensated with *stat,* such as grain, milk, and firewood, as specified in his contract, rather than money. It was a hard and insecure existence, and it speaks well for Anders Wiberg's ambition and energy that he was able to work his way up to farm manager at Lenninge. In 1882, one of his sons emigrated to the small Swedish settlement of Savonburg in eastern Kansas, where he could get land of his own.

In 1861, Franz Gustaf Norelius married Anna Wiberg in Bollnäs Church. She was then expecting their first child. Such a circumstance would not normally have led to marriage between persons of such widely differing social origins at the time. But Franz Gustaf was clearly a man of principle. The marriage must have been deplored by his relatives and friends as a terrible mésalliance. Jenny was convinced, however, that her musical talents were inherited from her Wiberg side. For generations they had been village *spelmän,* or fiddlers, and her mother had a lovely, although untrained voice. Her gifts as a singer gave Jenny the chance to go to America in 1889 and what I believe must have been a welcome chance to escape her uncomfortable position half inside—but half outside—the Swedish fashionable world.

Jenny's career was a highly unusual one for a Swedish immigrant in America. The tour of the "Swedish Ladies' Octette" in 1889-90, principally to centers of Swedish settlement in the Middle West and with Jenny often as its featured soloist, was enthusiastically received by local audiences, as was glowingly described in numerous reviews in Swedish-American newspapers. In 1892, shortly after my father's birth, Jenny joined a newly formed "Swedish Ladies' Quartette," which included her sister Vilhelmina and which both performed at the 1892 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and toured up and down the Pacific Coast, singing for delighted audiences.

Various anecdotes have been passed down of the quartet's tours in the still quite wild and woolly West. In Mohave, California, they performed in a warehouse where the local miners paid their admittance in gold dust. Continuing on to Bakersfield, the ladies attended a reception at which his honor the mayor

demonstrated his ability to hit a spittoon across the room. When Jenny was somewhat taken aback at this curious display, a local cowboy proudly exclaimed, "Shucks, ma'am, that wern't nothin', he can spit a lot further than that"—or words to that effect! In San Francisco, meanwhile, the ladies were feted at the sedate Century Club by the cream of local society.

In 1900, Jenny conceived a highly venturesome and ambitious plan: to return to Europe at the age of thirty-seven and resume her musical career in earnest. She surely encountered great disapproval for leaving her husband and two young children in Portland to seek success on the stage. But it is to Ernest's credit that he was liberal enough in his views that he always remained supportive and appreciative of the career she was determined to pursue.

After being coached at the Paris Conservatory for some months by a former teacher of the celebrated Swedish soprano, Christina Nilsson, Jenny performed widely in Europe—mainly in Great Britain—and in America, on both the operatic and the concert stage. Her greatest moments came in 1902, when she substituted for Blanche Marchesi at a Royal Philharmonic concert in London, sang in 1903 with Enrico Caruso at his American debut in Verdi's *Rigoletto* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and in 1905 filled in for the famous Nelly Melba, again in *Rigoletto,* at the Covent Garden Opera in London. Had she had the money needed for publicity, she was convinced, she might have made it right to the top.

That chance did not come. She toured with a couple of lesser-known American opera companies and gave concerts on both sides of the Atlantic. She was often a soloist at concerts given by various of the numerous Swedish-American men's choruses of the time and in 1912 was solo soprano at the annual *Messiah* Festival in Lindsborg, Kansas. At last, in 1914, she was offered the position of prima donna at the Dresden Opera Company in Germany, but the outbreak of World War I that summer intervened and Jenny returned permanently to America. During her later years, from the 1920s until her death in 1942, she was a highly respected voice teacher and operatic coach in Seattle.

Although she last visited Sweden in 1914, she remained both a patriotic American and a proud Swede. From her first arrival in the United States in 1889, she had been intimately involved on the Swedish-American musical and cultural scene. A talk she gave in Swedish on the Seattle radio station KXA's "Nordic Hour" in 1932 well summarizes the attitudes of Swedish America's cultural leaders toward their heritage. She spoke in glowing terms of Sweden's proud past and rich culture, and of the great accomplishments of the Swedes and other Scandinavians in America.

> America is a great and rich land with gold and treasures in abundance [she concluded]. But we who come from a smaller land and are not so rich, we have brought with us treasures that cannot be bought with gold. . . . Let us, as free natives of the North, give of our riches to help create a happier and freer America!

* * *

What has my study of two very different families—from widely separated parts of Sweden and social origins and with greatly differing experiences on both sides of the ocean—given me, both as a person and as a historian by vocation?

In the first place like others who have cultivated their genealogies and family histories, I too have learned much about myself by learning who and what my forebears were. I have sought neither to idealize them nor to apologize for them, but simply to take them as they were, in the context of their own times. In this way, I have found my own place, in what the British statesmen Edmund Burke described in 1790 as the great chain connecting the living with the dead and those yet to be born.

It has made history come alive for me in a way that a more abstract study of historical trends and developments never could have done. After all, history, as the nineteenth-century Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle put it, is the "essence of innumerable biographies." My family history is the story of real people, facing particular situations in the times in which they lived; people, moreover, who have been intimately connected with my own identity and destiny. The search has brought me through the years into contact with widely diverse worlds, on both sides of the Atlantic, *"från slott till koja"* ("from palace to hut") as they say in Sweden, or from timbered farmstead and rural parsonage to sod house and the operatic stage. What a colorful and varied picture of past times!

On a more practical level, it has brought home to me the importance of a good historical background in sensing what the possibilities and probabilities might have been at various times and under particular circumstances. Repeatedly, historical knowledge has put me on the right track in seeking out specific genealogical information. But at the same time, I learned of the importance of genealogical and family research in bringing down to earth and putting a personal face on the events and developments of the past.

Finally, I became ever more convinced of the importance of the amateur genealogist and local historian—for the professional historian of the "big picture"—in filling in those concrete personal details that keep history anchored in real life. Many, in both Sweden and the United States, showed great insight, ingenuity, and generosity in providing me with the information I needed for my research. *"Ingen nämnd, men ingen glömd"* ("no one named, but no one forgotten"), to quote the Swedish saying. Such persons have been and remain the indispensable link between the grassroots of real human experience and our broader understanding of the past. And so many of them over the years have become my very good friends!

* * *

This article is based upon my book, *The Search for Ancestors: A Swedish-American Family Saga* (Carbondale, IL: SIU Press, 1979), in Swedish translation, *Släkten. En svensk-amerikansk krönika* (Stockholm: LTs förlag., 1981), and "Jenny Norelius, 1863-1942: A Life in Song" (unpublished manuscript; copies at Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois; Swedish-American Historical Society, North Park University, Chicago; Nordic Collection, University of Washington Library, Seattle; and Bollnäs *Hembygdsförening,* Bollnäs, Sweden). These works contain references to the original sources consulted and credit those amateur genealogists and local historians who have given me such invaluable help.

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The Varied Careers of Peter Cassel

Kevin Proescholdt*

Peter Cassel is most widely known as the leader of one of the first Swedish settlements in North America during the nineteenth century. Though his role as the founder of the New Sweden, Iowa, community and as an instigator of the Great Migration that brought over a million Swedes to the United States is important, Cassel also developed a number of other "careers" during his lifetime that show the wide range of his interests and talents.

Early Life

Peter Cassel was born as Peter Carlsson on 13 October 1790 at Redeby in Asby Parish, in the southern part of Östergötland, Sweden. He was the first child of Carl Börjesson (1762-1834), a land-owning farmer *(bonde)* and Catharina Svensdotter (1761-1809). Like some of his Cassel ancestors, Peter did not always use the Cassel surname, but rather the more common patronymic surname. Peter used his Carlsson surname for the first several decades of his life.[1]

Peter traced his Cassel ancestry to his namesake, Peter Cassel (ca. 1540-16__), who came to Sweden from Scotland in 1592 to become master of the stables for Duke Karl. This Scottish Peter Cassel apparently helped lead the coronation procession when Duke Karl finally became King Karl IX in 1607. The senior Peter Cassel had two sons who were officers in the Östgötarne Regiment: cornetist or lieutenant Önnart Cassel participated in the battle of Stångebro in Linköping in 1598 and, like King Gustavus Adolphus, was later killed at the battle of Lützen in 1632; and lieutenant Mårten Persson Cassel (from whom the younger Peter Cassel descended) was badly wounded during the Thirty Years War and given in fief the estate of Ramsmåla in Torpa Parish of Östergötland around 1620 as a reward by King Gustavus Adolphus.[2]

The Cassel family lived in the same general area in southern Östergötland—Torpa, Norra Vi and Asby Parishes—for several generations. The younger Peter

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1 See Asby Parish (Ög.), Birth Records for 1790.

2 See Ax. Setterdahl, *Östgöta Nation i Lund 1668-1913* (Linköping: AB Östgöta Correspondentens Boktryckeri, 1913), 191-192; Herman Söderstéen, "Släkten Cassels äldre stamtafla," *Personhistoria Tidskrift* (1914): 41-46; and Kommendörkapten Eric Cassel, "Släkten Cassel," (1959, photocopy).

Carlsson Cassel grew up at Redeby in Asby Parish where he had been born, although he and his family lived at Lidhult in Norra Vi Parish from about 1800-1806, during which time several of Peter's younger siblings were born. The family, and Peter, returned to Redeby in 1806.[3]

Miller

Peter Carlsson began his first working career learning to be a miller *(mjölnare)* at the Långeryd grist mill in Asby Parish about two kilometers from his home at Redeby. He worked initially as a mill worker *(mjölnardräng),* while learning to operate the mill. It was here, however, that a major tragedy occurred. On a cold November day in 1809, when Peter was nineteen years old, his mother came to the mill, most likely to pay her oldest son a visit. She apparently slipped while at the mill, perhaps on some ice that had formed, and was crushed to death on the mill wheel. Catharina was just forty-eight years old.

Six years after this tragic accident, on 15 December 1815, Peter married for the first time to Anna Svensdotter.[4] Peter and Anna had probably known each other their entire lives, as she had grown up on a neighboring farm in Asby Parish called Besseryd.[5] Anna's father, Sven Israelsson, raised horses on Besseryd as a *rusthållare*, who was required to furnish horses or supplies for a cavalryman, and her ancestors had lived in the area and at Besseryd since the 1500s.[6]

In the following year, 1816, Peter and Anna moved from Asby Parish to nearby Kisa Parish.[7] The estate of Föllingsö there had been purchased by J. P. Hellvegh that year, and this change in ownership may have created the opening for a miller to operate the large mill there, just outside the town of Kisa.[8] Peter became the operator of this mill, and he and Anna moved into the cottage named Qvarnstugan[9] across the road from the mill in May. Here they lived for five years.

In 1821, however, Peter and Anna left Kisa Parish for neighboring Tidersrum Parish. The cause for their move is not known, and they lived in Tidersrum only a few months. The move came shortly after the death of their oldest child, Lena Catharina, who died from whooping cough in January of 1821

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3 See Asby Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1806-1817, 69. Carl Börjesson owned a portion of Lidhult; Redeby had been owned by Carl Börjesson's maternal grandfather.

4 Asby Parish (Ög.), Marriage Records, 1815.

5 The modern spelling of this name is Beseryd.

6 Olov Mattsson, letters to author, 22 January 1996 and 23 February 1996.

7 Asby Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1806-1817, 151; and Kisa Parish (Ög.), Moving In Record *(Inflyttningslängd),* 1816, 46. Peter and Anna moved to Qvarnstugan on 6 May 1816.

8 *En Bok om Kisa Socken,* Band 3, (Linköping, 1981), 131.

9 The modern spelling of this name is Kvarnstugan.

at Qvarnstugan. Perhaps their grief over the loss of Lena led to the move. But they moved back to Kisa Parish in December of 1821, just a couple of weeks before the birth of their oldest son, Carl Johan, who was born at Kjölefors[10] just north of the town of Kisa. Peter operated the mill at Kjölefors until 1824.[11]

In 1824, Peter and his family moved back to Qvarnstugan at the Föllingsö mill. Here he continued his work as a miller for the next fourteen years. In 1825, according to a note in the household examination roll (*husförhörslängd*), Peter discarded his patronymic surname of Carlsson and began using his old family name of Cassel. He used the Cassel name for the rest of his life.[12]

His remaining years at Qvarnstugan and the mill brought many changes in Cassel's life. Two more young daughters, Sophia Mathilda and Anna Sophia, and a son, Sven Fredric, were born in his family, but all died young; and Cassel's wife, Anna, died in 1829 due to childbirth complications from Anna Sophia's birth.[13]

But the following year Cassel married Ingeborg Catharina Anders-dotter, a farmer's daughter from nearby Bjerkeryd,[14] who was seventeen years younger than Cassel. Her father, Anders Jönsson, had been appointed by the courts as the custodian of the Cassel children after Anna's death until her probate was finished, and Cassel may well have met Ingeborg Catharina because of this connection.[15] He started a second family with her and soon Carl Johan, the one surviving child from his first marriage, had a houseful of younger siblings at Qvarnstugan.[16]

Inventor and Master Builder

While living at Qvarnstugan and running the Föllingsö mill, Cassel's aptitude for machine works and mechanical devices launched him on another career as an inventor. In the late 1830s, Cassel and a like-minded colleague, master builder *(byggmästare)* Anders Svan (or Svahn) from Kisa, invented a new threshing machine. The advantages of their new threshing machine apparently

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10 The modern spelling of this name is Kölefors.

11 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1816-1821 (Föllingsö), 4; Tidersrum Parish (Ög.), Moving In Record *(Inflyttningslängd),* 1821, 268 (they moved in on 13 May 1821); Tidersrum Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1816-1825, 86; Kisa Parish (Ög.), Moving In Record *(Inflyttningslängd),* 1821, 80 (moved to Kjölefors on 6 Dec. 1821); Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1821-1827 (Kjölefors), 250.

12 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1821-1827 (Föllingsö), 6.

13 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1826-1830 (Föllingsö), 6. See also Kisa Parish (Ög.), Death Records, 1829, 298.

14 Bjerkeryd is now sometimes spelled either Bjärkeryd or Björkeryd.

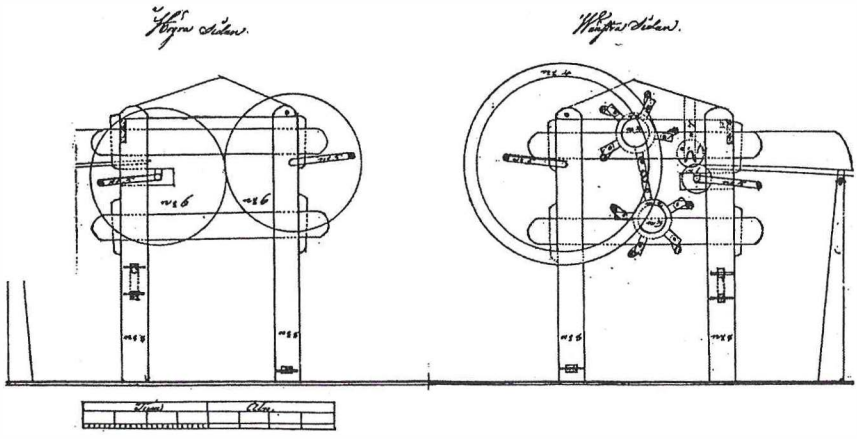
15 See Anna Svensdotter, Probate Record No. 84, Kinda Härad (Ög.), 1829.

16 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1831-1835 (Föllingsö), 10. See also Kisa Parish (Ög.), Marriage Records, 1830, 198.

lay in the fact that it was portable and, after threshing the grain, the machine left the straw whole and undamaged, suitable still for use in thatching.

Cassel and Svan applied for a patent for their new invention. On 18 December 1837, the National Board of Trade in Stockholm (*Rikets Commerskollegium*) granted them their patent for a period of eight years.[17] It may well have been Cassel's invention and patent that earned for him the description, like his partner Svan, of master builder or building contractor *(byggmästare),* which was often used in official records from that point forward.

But the strength of Cassel's patent may not have lasted long into the eight-year period. On 3 July 1838, Cassel and Svan complained in a legal proceeding of a patent infringement. Byggmästare Anders Sandström at nearby Brokind had invented a similar threshing machine that Cassel and Svan felt violated their patent. The legal proceeding dragged on for years. During this time, the National Board of Trade allowed their competitor to patent his threshing machine in 1840, apparently feeling it was different enough to qualify for its own patent. Finally in 1844, eight long years after Cassel and Svan first filed their complaint, their case was dismissed in favor of the Brokind threshing machine.[18] Still, the Agricultural Society (*Hushållningssällskapet)* was sufficiently impressed with Peter Cassel's and Anders Svan's threshing machine that the society included a description of the machine in the society's publication in 1842.[19]



Threshing machine line drawings. (Courtesy of the author.)

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[17] See Kommerskollegium Huvudarkivet, Registratur, 18 December 1837, volym B II a:105; and Patentansökningar, 1838, volym E XVII e 1: 5.

[18] The decision against Cassel and Svan was filed on 12 March 1844. Copies of complaint and decision in possession of author.

[19] *En Bok om Kisa Socken*, Band 4, 436.

Farmer

In 1838, Cassel and his family moved from Qvarnstugan to his wife's home farm at Bjerkeryd, initially leasing and later purchasing the Norrgård farm (North Farm) there from his father-in-law, Anders Jönsson. Cassel thus began another career as a farmer *(bonde).* Farming was not a new occupation for Cassel, as he had grown up on farms and had helped his father with the extensive manual work on the Redeby farm in Asby Parish. Cassel's Norrgård farm at Bjerkeryd contained about 75 hectares of land, or about 185 acres. The farms at Bjerkeryd (including another north farm at about 70 hectares and a south farm of about 140 hectares) encompassed some rich fertile lands.[20]

Cassel was undoubtedly welcomed there by his parents-in-law, who probably saw in his acquisition of their farm the solution to their own long-term care in their declining years. For Cassel's wife, Ingeborg Catharina, their move meant a homecoming to the large house in which she had grown up. Another son, Gustaf Albert Cassel, was born on the first of November in 1838, after their move to Bjerkeryd.[21]

Peter Cassel continued living in Bjerkeryd and farming Norrgård as well as building threshing machines until his emigration to America in 1845. The Kisa Parish household examination roll listed *Byggmästaren* Peter Cassel and his family at Bjerkeryd throughout the first half of the 1840s.[22]

Emigrant

During his years in Kisa Parish, Peter Cassel was well-known and respected in the community. He became a member of the parish council (*sockenstämman*), and was selected to be an elector of the members of the national Parliament (Riksdag) from the land-owning Farmer or Peasant (*Bonde*) Estate, one of four houses in the Riksdag. But he also began to acquire some views that were considered quite radical in Sweden at the time.

Cassel had become friends with Carl Gustaf Sundius, the apothecary or druggist in Kisa. The two talked often of politics, and shared similar views about such "radical" concepts as freedom, equality, and representation. A contemporary resident of Kisa described Sundius as a "political apothecary." This resident further described Sundius:

> Apothecary S. was so devoted to politics and eager to improve society through its enlightenment that he not infrequently neglected or forgot all

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20 Information obtained from Gunnar Svensson, Bjerkeryd, 16 June 1995.

21 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1836-1840 (Föllingsö), 11 and (Bjerkeryd), 436.

22 Kisa Parish (Ög.), Household Examination Roll *(Husförhörslängd),* 1840-1845 (Bjerkeryd), 15.

> else. Once, for example, when a farmer came to the shop to buy medicaments, it happened that after serving him, he accompanied the farmer, bareheaded in minus 18° [C] cold, all the way to Föllingsö mill, to impress upon him his ideals concerning freedom and throwing off the yoke, before it dawned upon him that there were several people waiting in the shop to have their prescriptions filled! He was a most fiery, well-meaning man.[23]

The man Sundius accompanied to Föllingsö mill was, most likely, his friend Peter Cassel.

Cassel, Sundius, and the young assistant pastor in Kisa, Jonas Janzon, became involved with an effort in 1844 to reform the representation in the Riksdag. A reform meeting was held in Linköping on 2 December 1844, and Cassel explained the issues to the farmers and the adamant opposition of the other Riksdag houses, concerning a more equitable system of representation. Cassel and others signed a formal petition favoring this reform, but the Riksdag ignored it and the change did not occur for twenty more years.[24]

Cassel and Sundius shared another radical view at the same time—freedom and equality could also be achieved by emigration to the United States.[25] Cassel had undoubtedly read or heard about accounts of America in some of the Swedish newspapers. Gustaf Unonius had founded the short-lived Pine Lake, Wisconsin, settlement in 1841, and some of his letters had appeared in Swedish newspapers describing life in America. Polycarpus von Schneidau and his wife joined Unonius there in 1842, and they no doubt wrote letters to his half-sisters who lived at Mjellerum in Kisa Parish, located next to Bjerkeryd. Cassel probably read some of these letters as well.[26]

For whatever combination of reasons—the failure of the Riksdag to enact reforms, frustration over his patent infringement case, the influence of Sundius, the letters of Unonius and von Schneidau, the dream of freedom in America—Peter Cassel resolved in the spring of 1845 to emigrate to America. He gathered together a group of twenty-one people, family and friends, that included not only his family, but that of Johan Danielsson (his good friend who then lived at Qvarnstugan), his wife's unmarried brother and sister (Eric Peter Andersson and Sara Lovisa Andersdotter), and his sister's family (Ingeborg Catharina Carlsdotter and Johannes Månsson).

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[23] Quoted in Curt von Wachenfeldt, "Background to Peter Cassel's Emigration," in *Peter Cassel & Iowa's New Sweden*, ed. H. Arnold Barton (Chicago: Swedish-American Historical Quarterly, 1995), 1.

[24] Barton, *Peter Cassel*, 73. See also *Östgöta Correspondenten* (Linköping), 22 Jan. 1845. One of the other signers to this petition was Cassel's brother-in-law, Johannes Månsson, who later joined Cassel's emigration party.

[25] Sundius started one of Sweden's earliest emigrant agencies in his apothecary shop in 1846.

[26] See Kevin Proescholdt, "America Letters and Iowa's First Swedish Settlements," *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 49 (July 1998): 169-171.

Cassel sold his farm back to his parents-in-law to finance the trip, and completed the many other tasks necessary to prepare to leave Sweden for the land of opportunity across the Atlantic. He intended to join Unonius at Pine Lake, Wisconsin. Unlike Unonius and von Schneidau, however, Cassel did not belong to the upper or noble classes in Swedish society, and his departure as a land-owning farmer caused quite a stir in Sweden. Newspapers in Sweden covered news of Cassel for several years, and various writers debated his character, judgment, and veracity.[27]

The Cassel party left Kisa Parish in May of 1845 and traveled, via wagon, north to the town of Berg and then via the Göta Canal, to the port city of Göteborg.[28] They arrived in Göteborg on 21 May 1845, but did not sail until 24 June on the sailing ship *Superb.* In the meantime, Cassel's skills as a building contractor were put to use, as the men in his party worked on a house under construction on a farm just outside the city that was owned by the ship's owner in exchange for lodging during the wait.[29]

On the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of New Sweden, in 1895, Cassel's son Andrew recalled their journey:

> The journey was commenced about the middle of May, in private conveyance for about 40 miles to Berg, where we took the steamboat that sailed between Stockholm and Gothenburg, through the lakes and Göta canal to the seaport Gothenburg where we had a sailing vessel engaged. But we soon found out that it was an old hull and not safe to sail in. So we threw up the contract and had to engage another ship, which had to be put in order and made suitable to carry emigrants. The main cargo was iron. And we stepped aboard the ship *Superb* about the middle of June, and sailed along very nicely until we came to the entrance of the English Channel. Then the wind began to blow right against us and continued almost a tempest for one whole week, which made nearly all the passengers sick. Again a little more than mid-sea, we had a severe storm, and the night during the worst of the storm was very dark so that we ran against another vessel and lost our front mast or what is called the bowsprit. Whether the other vessel was lost or not, we do not know, but one thing we do know, and that is, we were glad that we did not go to the bottom of the ocean. In eight weeks we landed at New York, very happy, to see the promised land.[30]

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[27] Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 72-77.

[28] Kisa Parish (Ög.), Moving Out Record *(Utflyttningslängd),* 1845, 51. According to the parish records, Cassel and his family received permission to leave Kisa on 21 April 1845. Although the parish records indicate that Cassel's nephew, the tailor Eric Johan Ericsson, left with Cassel's family, he actually didn't emigrate until after his marriage the following year.

[29] Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 71.

[30] Andrew F. Cassel's account, "History of the First Swedish Emigrants in the 19th Century who came to the U.S." was given on 15 August 1895 at the old Cassel homestead at the 50th anniversary of the settling of New Sweden. It is found on pages 7-18 of Carl J. Bengtson's *The*

The *Superb* landed in New York City on 11 August 1845.[31] In New York, Cassel met another Swede who had lived in America for several years, Pehr Dahlberg, who had come to New York to meet his family. Dahlberg advised Cassel that the best available government farm land was not in Wisconsin, but in the Iowa Territory. Cassel took Dahlberg's advice, the Dahlberg family joined the Cassel party, and the Swedish immigrants headed for Iowa. They took a combination of trains, canals, and rivers to cross the Allegheny Mountains, eventually steaming down the Ohio River, and then up the Mississippi River to Burlington, Iowa.[32]

They traveled west from Burlington about forty-two miles to what is now Lockridge Township of Jefferson County, Iowa, where they found government land available under the Preemption Act. Here they stopped, in the middle of September 1845, and began building homes for the settlement that became New Sweden, Iowa.

Writer

Even before they reached New Sweden, Peter Cassel wrote his first letter back to Sweden. His letters to Sweden were widely read, and some appeared in Swedish newspapers. His letters helped ignite a firestorm of interest in immigrating to America among the common classes of Swedish society in his home area, and his letters also re-ignited the debate in the Swedish press over his veracity and the merits of emigration. Cassel's home area of southern Östergötland and northern Småland became one of the earliest centers for emigration to America, and much of that interest can be traced to the letters from Peter Cassel's pen.

Cassel wrote his first letter from Cincinnati, Ohio, on the second of September, while still traveling to Iowa. He wrote it to his good friend Sundius who, with a touch of humor given both men's strong desire for equality, he addressed as "High Noble Apothecary."

> Now I would like to say something about the fact that since we left New York we have eaten fruit, as much as we liked, even grapes, for it grows wild in profusion. Poverty must be something unknown, for we have looked into what appeared to be quite miserable huts but there seen the

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Early History of New Sweden, Iowa, Part I, 1925, in manuscript form, Carl J. Bengtson Papers, ELCA Archives, Chicago.

[31] Nils William Olsson and Erik Wikén, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850* (Stockholm: Royal Library, 1995), 42-43 and 224-226.

[32] For information on how the Cassel party crossed Pennsylvania on the Allegheny Portage Railroad, see George Bernard Hanson, "How the Peter Cassel Party Crossed Pennsylvania," *Swedish American Genealogist* 15 (December 1995): 172-178. For a contemporary description of their travel from New York to Burlington, written by another Swede who joined the group, see Erik Wikén, "Who was Otto Wilhelm Åkerman?" *Swedish American Genealogist* 3 (September 1983): 111-115.

> inhabitants sitting at a set table with 4, indeed perhaps 6 dishes for their dinner and no bread that is not of fine-sifted wheat flour, for any other kind is hard to find. I was able once to buy some fine-sifted rye buns. Otherwise we have eaten nothing but fresh wheat bread since we arrived on American soil. In a word, peace and prosperity prevail here.[33]

Cassel continued his glowing descriptions of America in his next known letter, written from New Sweden, Iowa, in February of 1846:

> The ease of making a living here and the increasing prosperity of the farmers, year by year and day by day, exceeds anything we anticipated. If only half of the work expended on the soil in the fatherland were utilized here, the yield would reach the wildest imagination; but the American farmer, content with enough to give him a living and comfort, confines himself to plowing, planting, and harvesting.

Later in the same letter, Cassel described the nature of American society. His description, to those in Sweden living in that very class-conscious society, must have seemed almost utopian:

> Freedom and equality are the fundamental principles of the constitution of the United States. There is no such thing as class distinction here, no counts, barons, lords or lordly estates. The one is as good as another, and everyone lives in the unrestricted enjoyment of personal liberty. A Swedish bonde, raised under oppression and accustomed to poverty and want, here finds himself elevated to a new world, as it were, where all his former hazy ideas of a society conforming more closely to nature's laws are suddenly made real and he enjoys a satisfaction in life that he has never before experienced.[34]

Cassel's third known letter, written in December 1848, showed that his enthusiasm for America had not dimmed since his arrival three years earlier:

> Nobody in Sweden can imagine all the advantages America offers sober, honest, and industrious persons; for them it is a veritable land of Canaan, where the natural resources are literally flowing with milk and honey. But for those who neither can nor will work, who have left Sweden with other plans for making a living, they will without exception find a Siberia, and the sooner they leave the better, if they want to escape the greatest want and misery. Thus you see that this country can be at the same time both a Canaan and a Siberia. Truly it is a peculiar country!

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[33] Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 88.

[34] Ibid., 93, 95.

Cassel continued in this 1848 letter to describe the abundance of wildlife, particularly of the now-extinct passenger pigeon:

> I recall that I have mentioned in a previous letter what an abundance of game there is here; but it is impossible for a Swede to have a correct conception of it—for example, the millions, not thousands, of pigeons. The places where they roost at night are almost inaccessible morasses, because they congregate so thickly in the trees that they are either uprooted or their limbs are broken down, and that with such a terrific noise that it can be heard at a distance of two English miles, like a great waterfall. We see herds of ten or twelve deer. They are pretty wild, rather fleet, and hard to shoot.[35]

Cassel's letters sparked a huge interest in Sweden in emigrating to America, and hundreds of Swedes followed his example, left their homeland, and set off to "find Cassel" in America. Many did. Cassel's youngest daughter remembered that at one time, when she was a child, there were fourteen trunks in their attic belonging to other immigrants who had come to New Sweden and had gone out to nearby farms to work.[36] In the Kinda district alone (which included Kisa Parish), more than 6,000 people emigrated to America between 1845 and 1920, many in the early years inspired by the letters and descriptions of Peter Cassel.[37]

Pioneer

In Iowa, Peter Cassel and party began new work as pioneers. Cabins and homes needed to be constructed immediately upon their arrival at New Sweden for shelter during the upcoming winter. Cassel's son Andrew years later told of their first attempts at shelter, and how they moved into a roofless cabin:

> The first thing in order was to name the place [the cabin], and it was called Stockholm, and next to cut brush for the roof of the cabin. We soon found Ross' saw mill, got some boards and set posts in the ground and made a shanty. Next we commenced to make brick. To dry them we laid them on the roof of the shanty, where we had our goods, as it had a better roof than the cabin. After we had all lived comfortably for a week, it began to thunder very hard, and for night's quarters all selected the cabin. Soon it began to rain, and poured all night, and until this day I have not seen it rain harder or more fire in the air than that night. But it was rather lucky that we were on high ground or the creek would have washed us away. We had a good ducking but the next day was bright and we were busy airing and sunning our soaked clothes and other articles. Our board shanty lay level with the

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35 Ibid., 108-109.

36 Jeanette Jacobson, "Grandmother Jacobson's Ninety Years" (21 September 1941, photocopy).

37 Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 9. About 20% of the entire Swedish emigration to America from 1845-1850 (669 of the total 3,411 emigrants) came from Cassel's home area of northeastern Götaland. See Lennart Åslid, "Emigranter från Nordöstra Götaland till New York 1845-1850 och Deras Vidare Öden," Linköpings Universitetet, 10 februari 1976.

ground. All took courage and resolved to provide better quarters, for the Swedish immigrants had come to stay and make America their future home.[38]

Cassel and the other Swedish immigrants also had to begin breaking the land and start farming. Unlike the farms in Sweden, which in many instances had been under cultivation for centuries, the land at New Sweden had never been plowed or farmed. This presented new challenges to Cassel and the other Swedish settlers as they began cultivation of their new lands.

Soon, Peter Cassel and the other Swedish settlers began formally selecting the lands they wanted to purchase from the government. Cassel and the other early immigrants purchased their farms for $1.25 an acre under the terms of the Preemption Act, under which payment was not due until later. Carl Carlsson (or Charles Carlson, as he was called in America) came to New Sweden in 1846 and was apparently the first of the Swedes to file a claim for preemption land in Lockridge Township in October 1846.

Cassel himself filed his claim for 40 acres of land on 17 September 1847. His farm lay in section 20 of Lockridge Township near the heart of the New Sweden community. His 40-acre farm consisted of the NE1/4SE1/4 sec. 20, immediately west of John Danielson's land and west of where the New Sweden Methodist and Lutheran Churches would later be constructed.[39]

By 1850, Cassel had added another 40 acres to his farm, for a total of 80 acres. But typical of pioneer farms, not much of his farm was classified as "improved" acreage or under cultivation. Only 6 acres of Cassel's farm was so classified; the other 74 acres remained "unimproved". But he had built the value of his farm to $400, with another $50 in machinery and implements and yet another $90 in livestock.[40]

Cassel continued to add to his farm holdings through the years. On 12 January 1856, he bought 20 more acres of privately owned farm land immediately adjacent to and on the north side of his original 40-acre farm in section 20, which also adjoined his second 40-acre tract.[41]

At some point in the early 1850s, Cassel became a naturalized citizen of the United States, although the early, incomplete records for Jefferson County do not

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[38] See A. F. Cassel's account in "Jefferson County History, Settlement and History of Lockridge Township," *Fairfield Ledger*, 6 May 1903, 7.

[39] Original Land Entry Book, Jefferson County, Iowa, Recorder's Office, Fairfield, 94-95.

[40] See 1850 Agricultural Census, Lockridge Township, Jefferson County, Iowa. His second 40 acres was the SW quarter of the NE quarter of Section 20, which was kitty-corner to the northwest across the road from his initial 40 acres.

[41] Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 19.

record when. The special 1852 and 1854 censuses indicated that he was a voter, and the 1856 Iowa census recorded him as a naturalized citizen.[42]

Peter Cassel purchased yet another 40 acres in the 1850s, the NW1/4SW1/4 sec. 16 in Lockridge Township. This land lay about three-quarters of a mile north of his first farm, on the east side of the road. At the time of his death, Cassel owned nearly 120 acres of farmland in Lockridge Township, apparently having sold off 20 acres from his original land claim at some point.[43]

As Cassel entered his sixties, the physical farm work and other activities (see below) prevented him from operating his farm himself. He contracted with his son, Andrew, after he had reached the age of twenty-one, to do most of the demanding farm work at $100 per year.[44]

Church Founder and Pastor

One of Peter Cassel's last careers was of church founder and pastor in New Sweden. Back in Sweden, many people participated in a personal and pietistic revival against the staid and formalistic State Lutheran Church of Sweden. The participants in this revival were called, disparagingly by their detractors, *läsare* or readers, since the *läsare* believed that reading the Bible helped people better understand God and lead people into a personal commitment to their faith. The *läsare* met together to read the Bible and devotional materials in homes or places other than the churches. Yet the 1726 Conventicle Act *(konventikelplakat)* prohibited people from meeting for religious purposes unless a pastor was present.

While still in Sweden, Peter Cassel had been involved in the pietistic religious revival in Kisa (ca. 1825) as well as the temperance movement there, and was known in his community as a godly man. Cassel's threshing machine partner, Anders Svan, was also a religious man who would later help foster the Kisa-Västra Eneby Mission Church.[45] Cassel had also worked with the young assistant pastor at Kisa, Jonas Janzon, who the local *läsare* considered to be their pastor. Janzon, according to one story, would attend the meetings of the *läsare* and would stand up to begin preaching only when the constable arrived to break up the otherwise illegal religious gathering.[46]

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[42] See 1852 and 1854 Special Censuses, Lockridge Township, Jefferson County, Iowa; and 1856 Iowa Census, Vol. 49, Lockridge Township, Jefferson County, Iowa.

[43] Perhaps because of his purchases of additional land, Cassel also had a considerable debt load at the time of his death. For more information on Cassel's farm lands, see Peter Cassel Probate Records, Probate Box #8, Jefferson County, Iowa.

[44] Peter Cassel Probate Records, Probate Box #8, Jefferson County, Iowa.

[45] *En Bok om Kisa Socken*, Band 4, 228.

[46] *En Bok om Kisa Socken*, Band 4, 221.

After arriving on the *Superb* in New York, Peter Cassel and his party went to the *Bethel Ship* anchored in the New York harbor, where they attended services conducted by the Swedish Methodist minister, Olof G. Hedström. It was here that Cassel first heard Methodist preaching and doctrine, though he and his party remained Lutherans.[47]

After settling in New Sweden, Cassel and the others formed their own church, the New Sweden Lutheran Church, in January 1848 and called a shoemaker from their settlement, Magnus Fredrik Håkanson, to be their first pastor. Cassel described their church in his letter of December 1848:

> Send me three copies of the small hymnbook and one with large type and 2 or 3 catechisms. We need these as the old ones are very worn by frequent use and the catechisms we need for the children since they are to read their confirmation lessons in Swedish, because we now have a pastor. He is born in Blekinge and is 32 years old, a disciple of the true Pastor Sellergren and a faithful follower of him in life as well as in doctrine. He has now for eleven months preached every Sunday and holiday; on weekdays he works like the rest of us, because he does not need to take any time to write his sermons, as he has an unusual ability to speak. I recall some Sundays when he preached over two hours and as fluently the second hour as the first. The 9th of this month he married a Swedish girl. We are thirteen families who pay the pastor's salary; and there are four who are excused from paying him anything, although they nevertheless belong to the church.[48]

In the spring of 1850, New Sweden was visited by Olof Hedström's brother, Jonas J. Hedström, a Swedish Methodist pastor from Victoria, Illinois. He preached, beginning on Pentecost Sunday, for a total of three days, then returned in November for a revival meeting of eight days. It was from this revival meeting that he formed the New Sweden Methodist Church. Many of the settlement's leaders, including Peter Cassel and John Danielson, converted to Methodism by the power and passion of Hedström's preaching and helped establish the new church. Cassel, coming from his *läsare* and temperance background, felt the Methodist doctrine more closely comported with his own background and faith.

Hedström described his visits to New Sweden on February 1851:

> We have extended our work across the Mississippi River into Jefferson County, in the State of Iowa, where there is a large Swedish settlement. I visited that place last spring, and the people received me with much friendship. We began and continued a meeting three days, and the Lord was

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47 See, for example, Kevin Proescholdt, "Religious Life and Controversy in New Sweden, Iowa, 1845-1860," *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 47 (April 1996): 84-88.

48 Barton, *Peter Cassel,* 108.

> present to bless the people. Many were inquiring after the way of life; but having some appointments out, I had to leave this interesting field and go to my work on this side of the river. I visited my countrymen in Iowa the second time last fall, and held a meeting eight days. There was much opposition from those that rejected the life and power of religion; but the Lord poured out his Spirit and blessed the people: many souls were converted, and many more cried for mercy. I have never seen so great and general a revival among my countrymen as we had during this meeting. The last Sabbath that the meeting continued was the most interesting. We had a communion session on that day, and as no efforts had before been made to form a society, it was thought better to see how many would join our Church. The invitation was given, and sixty came and joined on probation. Two class leaders were appointed, and the missionary and people parted with many tears of joy, praising the Lord for his goodness.[49]

A somewhat mysterious Dr. Gustaf Smith served the New Sweden Methodist Church as its first pastor, sent by the Iowa Conference of the Methodist church. But he was soon expelled from New Sweden and the ministry, because of some now-unknown treachery and deceit.[50]

Cassel had initially been appointed by Hedström as a local preacher, meaning a layman who is authorized to preach. But from 1851, following Smith's dismissal, until the fall of 1854, Peter Cassel himself served as the pastor of the New Sweden Methodist Church. One of his contemporaries, Rev. Nils O. Westergreen, wrote of Cassel's service as pastor: "Old brother Cassel was one of the best men we have had among us. A gifted preacher, practical and endowed with clear insight in the Word of God, he served the Church faithfully and was of great blessing as long as he lived."[51]

In addition to serving as the pastor of the New Sweden church, Cassel may also have served as a traveling circuit-rider minister to scattered Swedish settlements as far away as Swede Bend in north central Iowa, 175 miles from New Sweden. At least one source credits Peter Cassel with visiting and preaching in Swede Bend in 1854. If he did so, he would have undoubtedly also visited the Swede Point (Madrid) settlement to the south, where his oldest son, Carl Johan Cassel, had lived since 1849.[52]

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[49] J. J. Hedstrom, Missionary, Report of February 25, 1851, in *Thirty-second Annual Report of the M. E. Missionary Society*, 1851, 63.

[50] C. A. Anderson, "A Short History of the Swedish M.E. Church, New Sweden, Iowa," ca. 1891, manuscript translated by Carl J. Bengtson, Carl J. Bengtson Papers, ELCA Archives, Chicago.

[51] Victor Witting, *Minnen från mitt Lif som Sjöman, Immigrant och Predicant* (Worcestor, Massachusetts: Burbank & Co. Tryckeri, 1902): 219-22. See also *Sändebudet*, 17 June 1940, 1, 5; and C. G. Wallenius and E. D. Olson, "A Short Story of the Swedish Methodism in America," *The Swedish Element in America*, Vol. II (Chicago, 1931), 25.

[52] The source that names Cassel as a visiting preacher in Swede Bend is George T. Flom, "The Early Swedish Immigration to Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. III, No. 4, 1905, 601-615. Other sources indicate that Gustaf Smith from New Sweden had visited the Swedish

The ninetieth anniversary booklet of the New Sweden Methodist Church contains a quote attributed to Cassel regarding his faith and doctrine: "You all know me as one accustomed to hearing a preacher of the pure doctrine and grounded in the correct doctrine of the atonement through Jesus our Lord and Redeemer, and therefore have the assurance that I would never subscribe to any doctrine that does not rest on this foundation."[53]

Rev. Peter Cassel remained active with the New Sweden Methodist Church even after he stepped down from the pastorate in the fall of 1854 at the age of sixty-four. He was further honored when Bishop E. S. Janes formally ordained him as a deacon of the Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in nearby Mount Pleasant, Iowa, on 29 September 1856.

Peter Cassel died in New Sweden, Iowa—his land of freedom and opportunity—on 4 March 1857.[54] He was sixty-six years old. Jonas Hedström mentioned Cassel's death in a report written in July of that year: "We have met with a great loss in the death of one of our beloved local preachers. He had been a member of the Church about six years, and was ordained deacon last fall by Bishop Janes. He was nearly fifty [*sic*] years old when he died. His end was triumphant; so much so, that his death carried conviction to some who had before been careless."[55]

Conclusion

Neither Peter Cassel nor any of his children ever returned to Sweden, but his memory and legacy there have continued. In 1914, for example, nearly seventy years after Cassel left Sweden, his grandson Wesley became the first Cassel family member to return to Sweden. Wesley sent a postcard to his aged father Andrew, showing the Kisa church Andrew had known as a boy. "Dear Father," Wesley wrote, "We are now in your little town [of] about 1900 inhabitants. We were up to Bjkrud [*sic*] last night and looked around." How exciting that must have been for Wesley and for the eighty-three-year-old Andrew, to re-trace the Cassel footsteps in Kisa and rekindle the collective family memories![56]

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settlements in Swede Bend and Sheldahl in 1854, but Smith had long since been dismissed from New Sweden at that point. Conceivably it was Cassel of New Sweden who traveled there rather than Smith of New Sweden. Andrew Erickson, who succeeded Cassel as pastor at New Sweden, also traveled extensively to Swede Bend and other settlements during his tenure from 1854-1856. See Witting, *Minnen från mitt Lif,* 439, 448-450, and 454; and N. M. Liljegren, N. O. Westergreen, and C. G. Wallenius, *Svenska Metodism i Amerika* (Chicago: Svenska M. E. Bokhandels-Föreningens Förlag, 1895), 443-448.

53 *Ninetieth Anniversary Celebration, New Sweden Methodist Church*, June 14 to 16, 1940, 8.

54 *Den Swenske Republikanen* (Galva, IL), 13 March 1857, 1.

55 *Missionary Advocate*, Vol. XIII, No. 7, October 1857, 55.

56 Wesley Cassel, postcard to A. F. Cassel, 10 July 1914. Andrew Cassel died in July 1915, and had earlier served six years in the Iowa Legislature.

Peter Cassel's legacy and memory live on in other ways as well. Since 1979, Kisa has held a Peter Cassel Day (Peter Cassel Dagen) celebration on the Sunday before Midsommar each June. The event is usually co-sponsored by the Filbyter Lodge of the Vasa Order of America, the Kisa-Västra Eneby Hembygdsförening, Kinda Kommun, and the Svenska Peter Casselsällskapet (Swedish Peter Cassel Society). In 1995, on the 150th anniversary of the Cassel party emigration to New Sweden, the Swedish-American Historical Society co-sponsored an American Peter Cassel Days in the New Sweden, Iowa, area, in conjunction with the Swedish Heritage Society of Swedesburg, the Lockridge Augustana Lutheran Church, and the New Sweden Lutheran and Methodist Churches.

In 1995, the Swedish-American Historical Society also published the book *Peter Cassel & Iowa's New Sweden*. This book included the special April 1981 issue of the society's *Quarterly* on Peter Cassel and New Sweden, as well as the seminal scholarly work on the same topic by George M. Stephenson from a 1929 issue of the *Swedish-American Historical Bulletin*. In 1996, the Svenska Peter Casselsällskapet published a Swedish language version of the same book. In 1998, on the twentieth consecutive Peter Cassel Dagen in Kisa, the Svenska Peter Casselsällskapet dedicated a plaque to the memory of Cassel and the entire first company of emigrants from Kisa, placed on a boulder, originally from Bjerkeryd, located outside the Emigrant Museum in Kisa, the same building that housed Sundius's apothecary shop and emigrant agency in Cassel's time.

Peter Cassel's legacy and memory also live on through his descendants in America. Cassel was the father to eleven children; descendants of Carl Johan, Anders Fredrik, Maria Mathilda, and Carrie Sofia help carry on Peter Cassel's legacy.

Children of Peter Cassel:[57]

1. **Lena Catharina Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish (Ög.), 21 February 1818; d. Kisa Parish, 24 January 1821.

2. **Carl Johan Cassel,** b. Kjölefors, Kisa Parish, 26 December 1821; d. Madrid, Boone County, Iowa, 25 November 1902; m. Ulrika Eriksdotter Dalander.

3. **Sophia Mathilda Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish, 20 October 1826; d. Qvarnstugan, 30 June 1827.

4. **Sven Fredric Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish, 3 April 1828; d. Qvarnstugan, 3 April 1828.

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[57] The birth records of the first five of Cassel's children give their surnames not as Cassel, but as the patronymic forms of Persson, Petersdotter or Petersson. For consistency's sake, I have listed the surname of all eleven children as Cassel.

5. **Anna Sophia Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish 29 May 1829; d. Qvarnstugan, 20 April 1830.

6. **Anders Fredrik Cassel** (Andrew Frederick Cassel), b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish 3 December 1831; d. New Sweden, Jefferson County, Iowa, 29 July 1915; m. Margareta Lovisa Petersson (Louisa Peterson).

7. **Maria Mathilda Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish, 27 January 1834; d. Fairfield, Jefferson County, Iowa, 9 December 1918; m. Carl Johan Petersson (Charles John Peterson) and Frans Oscar Danielsson (Frank Oscar Danielson).

8. **Catharina Cassel,** b. Qvarnstugan, Kisa Parish, 4 February 1836; d. New Sweden, Iowa, August 1846.

9. **Gustaf Albert Cassel,** b. Bjerkeryd, Kisa Parish, 1 November 1838; d. Helena, Phillips County, Arkansas, 27 December 1862.

10. **Peter Edward Cassel,** b. New Sweden, Iowa, 12 July 1849; d. New Sweden, 13 January 1875.

11. **Carrie Sofia Cassel,** b. New Sweden, Iowa, 14 August 1851; d. Spaulding, Adair County, Iowa, 16 March 1942; m. Axel Jacobsson.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks go to Norman Bergstrom, Earl Check, Lilly Setterdahl, and Olov Mattsson of Österbymo, Sweden, for sharing their research on Peter Cassel and New Sweden through the years; and special thanks to Kurt and Margot Rodin of Linköping, Sweden, who helped begin Peter Cassel Dagen in Kisa and with whom I've traced many of Peter Cassel's footsteps on visits to Sweden.

Diplomat and Dissident: The Involvement of Chargé H. W. Ellsworth in the Janssonist Emigration

John E. Norton*

During Nils William Olsson's long service in the U.S. diplomatic corps, he made wonderful Scandinavian contacts, both personal and archival, which he later used to develop his magnificent genealogical works on the Swedish immigrants.

A century before, other U.S. diplomats had been directly involved in planting seeds leading to the "great migration." Their efforts helped bring some 80 million Europeans to North America, among them around 1.2 million Swedes. It is thus fitting that this *festschrift* contain something about one of the most remarkable of those diplomatic efforts—the flight of the perfectionist "Erikjansare" dissidents from north central Sweden to the plains of western Illinois, begun in 1846 and continuing into the 1850s. Their departure helped open the floodgates of migration from Sweden, and was planned in consultation with U.S. representatives in Sweden. Those representatives clearly wished to encourage migration of Swedes, sometimes in the national interest (e.g., to help build the American west) and sometimes for more practical reasons of personal gain.

In the late winter and early spring of 1846, U.S. Secretary of State James Buchanan began receiving dispatches from the newly arrived thirty-two-year-old U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Henry Ellsworth in Stockholm.[1] They concerned an unusual series of events leading eventually to the first mass migration ever to leave that country for the United States. His dispatches described migration plans of about 1200 "Eric Janssonist" dissidents, from the provinces of Hälsingland, Gästrikland, Västmanland, and Dalarna, who had already been under pressure for nearly two years from church and state through religious persecution and political repression. Their "dream of America" was formed and realized, in part, by U.S. diplomats.

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[1] The Ellsworth dispatches are housed in the U.S. National Archives, Records of the Department of State, Dispatches from the United States Minister to Sweden and Norway, 1813-1906.

These dispatches show Ellsworth's direct involvement, along with associates like Consul C. D. Arfwedsson, in that first major Swedish emigrant enterprise to North America. They also give a fascinating look into its causes and results. They confirm that the Janssonists' flight from Sweden was not just an isolated, ill-planned, independent effort of religious fanatics, and that its outcome was more far-reaching than just the founding of a new "prairie utopia" called Bishop Hill, in western Illinois.

On 17 February 1846, Chargé d'Affaires Ellsworth wrote the following in dispatch number 8: "It is now feared that the hoped-for exemption of Sweden from the famine that is scourging Northern Europe, will not be realized. Around Stockholm, indeed, and in Southern Sweden, there is at present no great scarcity of provisions, but during the past two weeks sad accounts have reached the government of great distress in the Northern Provinces."

Less than one month later, in dispatch number 10 dated 7 March, Ellsworth wrote: "I regret to state that much sickness is now prevailing in Sweden and indeed to a greater extent than has been known since the cholera, the result of scarcity of food and an extremely open winter....I have received information that a large number of Swedes are intending to emigrate as early as practicable in the spring to the United States. They are inhabitants of the province of Dalecar[l]ia [i.e., Dalarna] and among the most industrious and honest of the Swedish population." They were the Erik Janssonists.

On 5 May 1846, his dispatch number 13 noted that "a Norwegian vessel of about 500 tons admeasurement [probably the brig *Tricolor* of Christiania] has just departed [Stockholm] for the United States for the sole purpose of conveying emigrants, and the question of how many passengers she is entitled to carry was submitted for my decision. [His answer was 2 persons for each 5 tons, or about 200 persons, dictated by the 2 March 1819 Congressional Act Regulating Passenger Ships and Vessels. She carried 22 Janssonists from Dalarna,[2] including the family of Lindjo Gabriel Larsson of Malung, who is said to have contributed the single largest sum, 24,000 *riksdaler,* to the Janssonist venture]. He continued: "There will be considerable emigration this year from Sweden to the United States, and this fact renders the question of some importance....In the best seasons, however, and under the most favorable circumstances, the Swedes produce little more than sufficient to supply the demand created by the wants of her own citizens—her soil is poor and badly cultivated, and her peasants are too often thriftless and improvident."

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[2] Nils William Olsson and Erik Wikén, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850* (Stockholm, 1995), 45, 231-32.

Ellsworth's dispatch number 14 of 5 June reported: "I have alluded in former dispatches to the large emigration from Sweden to the U.S., which will probably take place during the present year. The arrangements are now completed, and about 1,000 persons will sail this month from Gefle [Gävle] and Stockholm....The emigrants in question may be regarded as a fair specimen of the better class of Swedish peasants, and some are men of considerable property. They are generally hard-working, honest, lovers of order, and will, no doubt, prove a valuable asset to our population. They are dissenters from the Established Church of Sweden, and are in fact driven out by the strong hand of religious tyranny. I understand it is their intention to form a Colony as soon as possible in some of the Western States."

The Janssonists' dream of building a colony "in the western States" had indeed been in planning for some time, and had already been widely reported by provincial newspapers. *Tidning för Falu län och stad* and *Hudikswalls Veckoblad* both reported in November of 1845 that the Janssonists were preparing to emigrate, expecting "...to locate near the Mississippi River, on the plains along the Mississippi and its tributaries. There they hope to find the Promised Land. It is true that these plains are very fertile, especially in the production of wheat, corn, rice, many fruits, flax and hemp. Nature there is very generous and mild. But what is primarily attracting the Janssonists is the complete religious freedom there." They would build their agricultural utopia in a " Promised Land where they would eat figs, wheat bread and pork, since swine are in such *excess* that one needs only shoot, slaughter and eat." No language problems were anticipated, since they would be given the Biblical gift of tongues. The heathens would even build walls and towns for them. All would be as one happy family, with lions and cattle grazing together.

While editorial comment was caustic and doubting, it shows clearly that these northern Swedish farmers had already gained a substantial impression of North America from sources they trusted. One such source was American Presbyterian temperance missionary Robert Baird, whose 1832 immigrant guide, *View of the Valley of the Mississippi, or the Emigrant's and Travelers' Guide to the West,* had doubtless traveled with Baird during his temperance lecture trip to northern Sweden in August of 1840.

Baird's book reported that "there is in the Valley of the Mississippi an immense extent still of the finest land in the world, which may be purchased at the sum of one dollar and a quarter per acre." He was even more specific about Illinois: "The soil of this state is generally very fine, and exceedingly productive....Horses, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry of every kind, are raised with the greatest ease....No country in the world has greater advantages for

raising livestock. Hogs are raised with little trouble and expense. The fruits of the forest...are fine food for them....The staple productions...are Indian corn, wheat, Irish and sweet potatoes, beef, pork, horses, tobacco and lead...hemp, flax and silkworms succeed well. Apples, peaches, pears, plums, cherries, grapes, gooseberries and currants arrive at great perfection." The similarity between Baird's description and that published in provincial Swedish newspapers is striking and probably not accidental.

On 2 September 1845, *Norrlands Posten* of Gävle reported that Olof and Jonas Olsson, Janssonist "apostles" from Söderala, had sold their substantial farms and were heading for America. On 4 October even the distant *Östgötha correspondenten* reported Olof Olsson's 8 September departure for New York aboard the *Neptunus*, while at the same time answering a critical reader who claimed emigration was "a sickness."

After arriving in New York on 16 December 1845, Olof Olsson, acting as scout for the Janssonist settlement, wrote: "The Communion table is spread for you upon the New Earth. Everything is ready, so that it can be said in truth...when you set foot upon the Blessed Land, 'Come, let us go up to Zion.'" He encouraged them to "Help the poor servants over. Money is of no value in America except to buy land. A good woman or maidservant, or one of our farmhands, is worth far more than money. They quickly work off their debt....This is a land like the Heavenly Kingdom....It is a land for action....A land where worker as well as Regent may eat wheat bread."[3]

As Janssonist groups prepared to depart, their expectations were high. The state of mind among a party of thirty-six, departing Stockholm in July 1846 aboard the brig *Agder,* was described by Norwegian doctor G. C. Paoli, who accompanied the group. (Paoli later settled in Chicago, where he became a prominent physician.) He wrote: "When I went aboard, the entire party was assembled on deck; an unmistakable joy shone in their looks, since they could hereafter freely, and without comment, practice their religion. This religious fanaticism had numbed all other feelings, to the point where I sought in vain for traces of sorrow in their faces over leaving, perhaps forever, their fatherland, relatives and friends...They were all firmly convinced that they would, upon arrival in New York, be able to speak English....It did no good when I tried to convince them of the unreasonable in such a belief; the Holy Spirit, they said, would give them the power to do this, since Erik Jansson had expressly told

[3] The Olof Olsson letter was translated in its entirety by Wesley Westerberg and published in *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* XXIII (April 1972).

them that no matter to which land they came, they would immediately be able to speak its language."[4]

Jansson's published *Farewell speech to the People of Sweden* had, after all, pointed out that: "to be able to do God's work among a people of a foreign tongue, I trust in Him who has given me tongue and voice....I Corinthians 11:10 shows He can give the gift of tongues and the gift of speaking. In Isaiah, Ch. 49 he tells me I can be a light unto the heathens, for which He then gives me the strength to shine for them."

The failure of that promise was confirmed in late September on the *Agder*, when Dr. Paoli asked a newly-boarded American New York harbor pilot to try to communicate with the Janssonist party in English. It led to the first desertions among the Janssonists, and the first of many negative reports back to Sweden of their problems in the New Land. On 3 March 1847, the newspaper *Helsi* of Söderhamn reported the *Agder's* arrival in New York, along with at least six other ships (*Wilhelmina* and *Solide* out of Gävle; *John Holland* out of LeHavre; and *Charlotte, Caroline,* and *Fritz* out of Stockholm) together carrying over 600 Janssonists. On 14 May 1847, *Helsi* also contained a letter written by Brita Gustavson, saying she had left Jansson in New York because she had been unable to speak English as promised.

Swedish ship owner and American Consul C. D. Arfwedsson[5] in Stockholm (himself an experienced friend of America) reported in July of 1846 that many in the departing Janssonist groups were financially well off and, to his knowledge, planning to settle in Wisconsin. Arfwedsson, as both consul and representative of the Tottie & Arfwedsson trading company, had good reason to encourage continued migration. Swedish iron exporters had suffered a business recession from 1841 to 1843, putting pressure on shippers to find replacement cargoes, like emigrants, who unlike pig iron paid their way in advance! In 1842, calling himself an "impartial countryman," Arfwedsson had anonymously authored an eight-page immigrant guide addressed "to those who next year plan to leave Sweden and Norway for the United States."

In July of 1846, Eric Jansson's advance party reached western Illinois, where they found no Zion, but a prairie wilderness. They first bought a small 80-acre farm with cabins and standing crops at Red Oak Grove, and soon increased their holdings to nearly one square mile of prime Illinois prairie. By October,

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[4] The Paoli letter was later published by Theodore Schytte as an appendix to his *Vägledning för emigration,* Stockholm, 1849.

[5] Olsson and Wikén, *SPAUS,* 153. Arfwedsson served as U.S. Consul in Stockholm from 1838 to 1855, after extensive travels in the United States and Canada, about which he wrote in *The United States and Canada in 1832, 1833 and 1834.*

they had readied two log cabins, four large tents, and a huge canvas-walled church, which collectively housed some 400 immigrants that first winter, augmented by dugouts and sod huts, built in the fashion of Swedish charcoal burners' huts. Suffering lack of food, buildings, and experience, almost half the arriving Janssonists died or deserted that first winter to places like Chicago, Galesburg, and Victoria, planting Illinois' first "Swedetowns." Some late-fall arrivals in New York even remained stranded there through the winter aboard canal boats.

On 23 September 1846, E. Myrén wrote from New York to Crown Bailiff Johan E. Ekblom, a strong friend of the Janssonists, about their first troubles in the new land.

> Now all the Readers have gone inland, so that there are only 3 from Helsingland and 2 from Vestmanland remaining in New York.... we signed off from the sect completely, since they were a damned self-serving pack, and we didn't want to follow them into the wilderness, 25 miles from any passable road....Jon Olsson, when he first came to New York, said that he hadn't paid in more than he'd wanted, and no one had to follow them inland any further than he wished, and when someone said 'give me my money back,' he answered that he had never gotten any money from them. But this didn't last very long for Johan Olsson, because the Swedish Consul [Claudius Edward Habicht] quoted law to him and ordered that 'if you've brought people here you should take them inland, or pay their way back to the homeland,' upon which Jonas had to give in and let as many who wished follow along. But as for us, the Consul has been, and will be, like a father to us. Now, he has recommended me to a place three-days' sail south of New York, on an estate paying 500 Riksdaler until 1 April 1847, during which time I can learn something of their language and get more pay. I forgot to mention that I'll even get food, bed linens and room, the other 3 from Helsingland will also be on the same farm.[6]

One disappointed Janssonist who arrived on the *Charlotte* on 15 September 1846 and followed them only as far as Chicago, was Anders Larsson. There, he began writing a remarkable thirty-four-year series of letters to his friend, Bailiff Johan E. Ekblom, about the sect's American experiences beginning the fall of 1846. In one, dated Chicago, 19 October 1846, he wrote:

> It was with joy that we came ashore in the New World after many adventures with the Readers and others. Around 30 left the faith which I

[6] Albin Widén, *När Svensk-Amerika Grundades* (Borås, Distriktslogen Norra Sverige, Södra Sverige, Vasa Orden av Amerika, 1961), 56-59.

> had followed so long, but which had finally become so unlike my expectations that I found it best to leave rather than believe and preach erroneously to such a degree that, for example, if someone became sick they were declared unfit for the Faith and committed to Hell. One day, someone might be damned, then taken back...We were in New York 5 adventuresome days, and everyone who had left the sect were not to be allowed to follow them further, but through Consul [Habicht] and Pastor Hedström, the Prophet Jansson had to allow everyone to go inland, but permitted 10 to remain.... Many went crazy on the voyage, about 10 stayed in New York, and here [in Chicago] there are about 27....Everyone has a decent wage, and any who work should not suffer. I forgot to mention that the price of a stove is from 9 to 13 dollars. A good maid here gets from 2 to 10 dollars a month beside food....Today there was again a critical article in our newspaper. The Readers are claimed to be a frightful bunch, they're called 'worms.'...it looks like this arrogant faith will not be accepted here, since all other religions bow before their God, but these [Janssonists] say they are equal to God, and as soon as they've learned the language, they'll probably begin to preach their usual lessons. It's said they'll soon be murdered....on the 2nd of October we passed Milwaukee, the 3rd we came to Chicago in the State of Illinois, and then we were not permitted to follow the party further, which now had around 27 Swedish miles, or 170 English miles, to their purchased Settlement, which is said to be a Paradise-like Eden in this State of Illinois and Hendrik Conte [Henry County].[7]

By December 1846, Larsson reported the first tragic consequences of the long voyage to America and primitive conditions at Bishop Hill. He wrote: "I can't say much about the Readers, there has been great sickness among them, and a month ago over 100 were dead." In April of 1847 he added that "over 100 have left them and according to rumor, it is said that things are not good within the congregation....300 are supposed to have stayed in New York over the winter, and will soon arrive here since Canal traffic opens the 15th."[8]

In June of 1847, Swedish adventurer Johan Edvard Liljeholm visited Bishop Hill and reported that:

> the Janssonists had been here since December, and were now in a most wretched condition, as the voyage across the ocean had brought on sickness, which had taken a number of them, especially older people. Of the 520 who had left their pleasant homes in their native land in good health, attracted by the glowing description of the Promised Land, and believing the false

[7] Ibid., 27-34.
[8] Ibid., 75-77.

> teachings of Erik Jansson, there remained now no more than 400, of whom a third were sick. During the winter, they had lived in so-called canal boats [decked vessels, 60' from stem to stern, 24' in beam, and 9' above the waterline, drawn on the canal by horses], and in these, they had to endure the winter without any heating, and only gruel and poor bread to eat. Some of the so-called "apostles" and those who had been rich [now all property was held in common] fared better, and lived in houses. Their daily occupation was fasting and prayer. Their sermons were sometimes preached by women and children, and consisted of screaming the same words loudly, over and over, until they got hoarse, when another would take the pulpit, and hymns were sung from Eric Jansson's hymnal. However, the Americans, who did not understand their language, thought them models of piety, and the Bible Society in New York gave them several hundred copies of the Swedish Bible.[9]

On 9 July 1847, Anders Larsson wrote that he had visited Bishop Hill in early June, to find that "the readers have now bought many thousands of acres in an area called Henry County, 30 English miles from the Mississippi, 15 miles from Victoria, with the richest of soils, and paid 2 1/2 to 5 Riksdalers an acre....And it's the most beautiful place anyone could wish....There, they've built around 30 dugouts, quite comfortable for their purpose. They're now beginning to build their new city "Bishop Hill." While I was there, a surveyor laid out the city, to be built in a square, with 18 houses on each side externally, and inside, orchards and fields, plus a large church. All the houses in the city will be built out of unfired brick, plastered and whitewashed on the outside."[10]

He also noted that 340 new immigrants had arrived, out of that party of over 400 that had landed the previous December and January in New York.

> Those chosen as teachers [apostles] are 12, and all now have gone to school to learn English since last fall, and do nothing else, since it had been prophesied that they would be able to speak in tongues as soon as they had set foot in the New World, and they'll soon be proficient in English. The Prophet himself preached in English for the first time on 7 June, and these apostles will soon be sent out to preach [as they say] before the heathens....Seventy emigrants who left Söderhamn shortly after midsummer last year were...lost at sea [aboard the ill-fated *Betty Catharina,* disappeared off Newfoundland]....Besides these 70, there were probably around 100 who died, while another 180 died [at Bishop Hill], and

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[9] Johan Edvard Lilljeholm, *Pioneering Adventures of Johan Edvard Lilljeholm in America 1846-1850,* trans. Arthur Wald (Rock Island, IL, 1962), 14-15. See also Johan Edvard Liljeholm, *Detta förlovade land, Resa i Amerika 1846-1850,* ed. Olov Isaksson (Stockholm: LTs Förlag 1981), 39-52.
[10] Widén, *När Svensk-Amerika Grundades,* 27-34.

> another 150 left the faith....while I was there, another 20 newcomers left, and they expected Pastor Hedström from Victoria to come in to get more....When I left, there were about 600 remaining" [in Bishop Hill].[11]

But after the first harvest, triumphant colonist Anders Andersson wrote on 30 November 1847: "I take up my pen, moved by Our Father's spirit, when I see how God has blessed us a hundred times more here on the new earth with both spiritual and earthly goodness than we owned in our fatherland....We have bought properties here which couldn't be exchanged for a fourth of all Sweden. It would not be too much to say that this land flows of milk and honey....We sent out 9 of the young men who are going to English school to cut wheat, and when they had bound it, they got 1/3 as pay...75 barrels of good wheat in one month's time."[12]

And in April 1848, Johan Edvard Liljeholm returned to Bishop Hill finding that "it was quite different from my last visit there. A new church, and some larger buildings had been erected, all of unfired brick, along with several flourmills and sawmills. All their lands, amounting to around 10,000 acres, were surrounded by a ditch, from which the earth had been piled into a high wall around it. More than 500 acres were under cultivation and planted with wheat, corn, flax, etc."

Letters and reports like these, published in the Swedish press, were either sensationalistic damnations or strong affirmations of the Janssonists and their experience in America. They were, however, sufficient to prompt Chargé d'Affaires Ellsworth to write an explanatory dispatch concerning reports of those first immigrants. His dispatch number 31 of 3 May 1847 reads:

> It seems that the Swedish emigrants mentioned in previous dispatches, who sailed last summer, to the number of about one thousand, from Stockholm and Gefle are <u>dissatisfied</u> with the change made, and have written back letters for publication, dissuading others from following their example.
>
> The matter, however, is fully understood here, and the hardships they have experienced must be attributed to <u>themselves</u> alone. They entrusted large sums of money to an agent (Jansen)[*sic*] who sailed for the United States some months in advance of his principals, and after a misapplication of the funds committed to his care, fled to parts beyond their knowledge.

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[11] Ibid., 27-34. The letter was translated and published in *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* XXIV (July 1973).

[12] Ibid., 21-24. The Andersson letter was also published in the liberal Stockholm newspaper *Aftonbladet* on, 23 May 1848. The letter was also translated and published in *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* XXIV (July 1973).

This has of course reduced them to the painful necessity of hiring out their services, for daily support, and this too in a distant land where they had anticipated an immediate removal onto tracts purchased for their little Colony!

To this must be added ignorance both of the language and customs of the people amongst whom they have settled. It is probable therefore that the remainder of the "Jansenists" [*sic*] as they are called, will defer their Emigration, anticipated during the coming summer, to some more favorable period.

Considering the use made of the facts mentioned, in several of the Swedish papers, and by the disappointed remnant of the "sect" alluded to, the occurrence is to be regarded as unfortunate. I have, however, on all occasions where the matter has been discussed in my presence, pointed out the true origin of the difficulties under which the Emigrants have labored, and that they have been in fault through too much confidence in one of their own nation.

It is to be hoped that Congress has prepared some restrictive regulations providing for better treatment of Emigrants during their passage across the Atlantic, and preventing their immediate addition to the ranks of the more abject poor on their arrival in the United States."

Ellsworth's comments, while hampered by lack of accurate information about Erik Jansson's new Illinois colony and influenced by sensationalistic press reports, show his deep concern that the United States be considered a safe haven for Swedish immigrants and a land of opportunity for all. The Janssonists who remained at home did not, for the most part, "defer their Emigration," but continued to depart for opportunity in the West through the early 1850s.

Ellsworth's Swedish counterpart in New York, Consul Claudius Edward Habicht, continued to watch and help the growing stream of Swedish immigrants. On 16 April 1850 Habicht authored a report to the Swedish Foreign Ministry on U.S. immigration policy, noting that "in Henry County, Illinois there are between 5- and 600 Swedes, some belonging to the so-called 'Jansenisterna,' but from which the majority have now parted, since their 'prophet's falseness and cheating had become evident to them."[13] Just a month later Erik Jansson was dead, shot in the Henry County Courthouse on 13 May by a disappointed colonist, John Root. Yet, the Bishop Hill Colony continued, as did the "great migration" from Sweden, observed and sometimes even assisted by Swedish diplomats like Habicht. But that's another story, still untold!

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[13] *Departementssekreterare* Tommy Andersson, a member of Sweden's *Bishop Hill-sällskapet*, recently found this report in Swedish Foreign Ministry Archives. He continues to search for other diplomatic records relating to the Janssonist migration 1846-1850.

From Ljusnarsberg via Ishpeming to Trade Lake

Hans Norman*

To Nils William Olsson:

The purpose of this contribution is foremost to send a warm thank you to Nils William. I spent the 1967-68 school year in the United States on a scholarship from Svenska Amerikastiftelsen in order to collect material for a doctoral dissertation about emigration from Örebro province to North America. I was supposed to meet Nils William on the first day after arriving. A city bus brought me from St. Paul along the long University Avenue in the summer heat toward the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. This was the first time I saw the institute—and Nils William. The foundation for my great appreciation for him, his thoughtfulness, and his generosity was laid during this meeting, which took place over an informal lunch. He took care of me as a young, newly arrived researcher, as well as my family at the time—my wife Margareta and children Kristina and Anders--in his impulsive and yet very sensitive manner. His thoughtfulness concerned most things, from research contacts to practical issues of all kinds. Margareta got a part-time job at the American Swedish Institute and admittance to the Shriner's Hospital was arranged for our son, which was of great importance for his future. Nils William made sure we had an eventful existence and thanks to his extensive network of contacts, we enjoyed the social life among Swedish-Americans and others. We were frequent guests in his and Dagmar's home. We lived in their house by beautiful Cedar Lake when they spent the summer in Sweden, and we felt a genuine friendship with them and their whole family. Therefore, I submit this short article with thankful thoughts of Nils William as a generous and broad-minded personality and friend of such great importance to the research community and contacts between America and Sweden. The article builds on a few of my first observations on American soil of the pioneering emigrants from Ljusnarsberg in northern Örebro's mining area who arrived in western Wisconsin's Swedish community for varying reasons.

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Much attention has been paid in emigration research to the importance of the course of events during the early phase of emigration. It has become evident that the emigration that took place initially, when people looked for ways to secure their livelihood in another country, often determined the development of the continued emigration from the area. During the end of the 1860s, more than 300 people left Ljusnarsberg Parish for North America, many of them settling in western Wisconsin. The emigration that took place then was not unique. At this time, substantial numbers of people emigrated from many parts of Sweden after hardships brought on by the years of failed crops in 1867 and 1868. These years of famine did not only affect the farming community. They also unleashed a financial crisis for the country's industry in general. The effect on mining operations, an important industry in this part of Bergslagen, was detrimental. However, what is interesting in this situation is how the very first emigration from Ljusnarsberg started and the direction it took. Where did the impulses come from and where did they lead? This is what contributed to this parish's very high future emigration numbers, the second highest in all of Örebro province, surpassed only by Karlskoga.

Ljusnarsberg Parish in Nya Kopparberg mining district was strongly characterized by the mining industry. It comprised the southern part of the so-called Grängesberg mining fields. People here earned their living mainly from this industry, often combining work in the mines with farming on a smaller scale. Due to the barren nature of the land, the tillable areas were especially small in this area, the fields being only 3 hectares on average. Under these circumstances, an economic crisis hit hard and led to a strong tendency among the mine workers and day-laborers to seek their livelihood elsewhere.[1]

Why did people leave for America during this early period? Erick H. Johnson, who emigrated from Ljusnarsberg as a child together with his parents, tells us about the reasons. He emphasizes three factors as contributory causes: 1) the upswing of the mining industry in the United States; 2) the creation of the Homestead law, which allowed any poor person to become a farmer in "the world's biggest republic;" and 3) someone who had been in America previously had sent home a few copies of the paper *Hemlandet*, in which those at home could read about "Lincoln's free homestead law." According to Johnson, the papers circulated among people in the area until they were worn to pieces. The result was that a large number of people left for the new land, against the wishes and advice of their foremen.[2]

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[1] *Emigrationsutredningen*, bilaga V, sid. 186.

[2] E. H. Johnson's accounts of the conditions behind the early emigration from Ljusnarsberg are available in two articles: "Barndomsminnen från nybyggartiden i norra Wisconsin" (Childhood memories from pioneering times in northern Wisconsin), *Valkyrian* (1900) and "Så var det i början" (This is the way it was in the beginning), *Prärieblomman* (1912).

The road to the final settlements in the new land was somewhat complicated for the first emigrants from Ljusnarsberg. By no means did they travel directly to the homestead areas they most likely had in mind. The reason has to do with the usual pattern of the emigration phenomenon. Previous occupations highly influenced the destination upon arrival. During the Civil War, the mining companies in Michigan advertised in Scandinavian papers for skilled workers in various capacities. The war situation created a shortage of workers at the same time as the war industry was in need of more metal. Agents from Quincy Mining Company in Michigan spread information regarding the possibilities of obtaining work in the mines in the northern part of the state. This was the background for the ship *Ernst Merck* setting sail already in July 1864 carrying a total of 478 emigrants onboard. Of these, the majority would settle in Michigan. Miners from many areas of the Nordic countries made this journey, not the least from the areas of Åtvidaberg in Östergötland. Also, it has been determined that a number of people from Ljusnarsberg most likely were among them, because the Lutheran parish in the mining town of Ishpeming registered immigrants from Ljusnarsberg already in 1864.[3]

As was common in regards to emigration, they became important contact persons during the continued emigration period. During the emigration that took place due to the years of famine, they obviously were of great importance, because E. J. Johnson notes, that among the emigrants of 1868 from the Ljusnarsberg area, "everyone involved in mining in Sweden, headed for Ishpeming, Michigan."[4]

It cannot be determined to what extent the emigrants from Ljusnarsberg regarded Ishpeming as a temporary destination, but many soon found their way elsewhere. A common pattern was that emigrants who lacked capital of their own first tried to save up, by working in industries, forestry, or by other means, to obtain a homestead farm. This also became the future for the majority of the immigrants from Ljusnarsberg. The populations of many of the American mining towns were characterized by the presence of a large number of men and people who were very mobile geographically. Accustomed to a rather quiet life in Sweden's Bergslagen, many people from Ljusnarsberg may have found Ishpeming environment to be too heterogeneous and hectic. It was a place with seething activities and a very mixed population, of which those born in America accounted for only a small part. Statistics from the 1870 federal census reflect Ishpeming's diversity (see Table 1).

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[3] Church records from Ishpeming Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Michigan.
[4] E. H. Johnson, *Valkyrian* (1900).

Table 1. The ethnic make-up of Ishpeming, Michigan in 1870.

Irish	30%	American born	5%
English	27%	French-Canadian	5%
Swedish	18%	German	4%
Norwegian, Danish, Scottish	10%	Others	1%

Source: The Ninth Census of the United States, 1870. Population and Social Statistics, Washington, D.C., 1972.

The Swedish pastor of the Lutheran congregation, S. P. A. Lindahl, consequently complained about the sinful and active life in the city, where most people preferred to spend Sabbath at the saloon:

> The congregation in Ishpeming is small in comparison with the large number of countrymen which are to be found in this place, and will perhaps for a long time be of no account, in as much as most of those on the outside area such as neither want to, nor can be received in the congregation. Many will not, and some say they are not to stay here long, only long enough time to earn the means to move to a milder and more agreeable climate. They find it unnecessary therefore to join the congregation.[5]

Even if many of the emigrants from Ljusnarsberg may have had the sense of not belonging in Ishpeming, their settling in Trade Lake seems to have been by coincidence. E. H. Johnson notes that a person from Hudiksvall on Sweden's east coast, had settled on a beautiful point of land in Trade Lake, Burnett County already in 1865. He eventually tired of living alone with only Indians for neighbors. Therefore, he placed an advertisement in the paper *Hemlandet,* where he described the homestead land available in this area as the most beautiful in this part of Wisconsin. This brought about such a big interest among the people from Ljusnarsberg in Ishpeming that a knowledgeable person was sent to further investigate the circumstances. His name was Carl Andersson. He verified that, "The area is Nordic in all respects, but with much more fertile soil and resources for subsistence many times bigger. There are lakes and rivers rich in fish, there are deer in countless numbers, and it is just to take and eat."[6]

Consequently, many of the earlier Ljusnarsberg people moved to Trade Lake in 1868 and 1869, both from Ishpeming and the Green Bay area, where industries had attracted many people. More arrived directly from Sweden, as

[5] Letter from Pastor S. P. A. Lindahl, 1873, the archive of Ishpeming Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Michigan.
[6] E. H. Johnson, *Valkyrian* (1900).

mentioned in the introduction. Carl Anderson played a prominent part during this relocation. He was no novice in regard to America-travel, as he emigrated already in 1865. He became somewhat of a central figure in the new settlement and continued to play an important part in the immigration to Trade Lake. Ten years after the first settlement in the area, he returned to Sweden as an agent for the Allan Line. In the spring of 1879, he returned with about 80 new emigrants from the parishes of northern Örebro province and southern Dalarna.

The Trade Lake settlement developed into one of the larger areas with Swedish immigrants and became well known among the Swedish population in the Midwest. A rather large number of Norwegians also settled here. The original population consisted of those who came from Ljusnarsberg and surrounding parishes. Another rather homogenous group of immigrants came from the parishes around Hjälmaren in Örebro province. These people were predominantly Baptists. Therefore, this area of Wisconsin would be dominated by two active, religious persuasions—Lutherans and Baptists—influencing the ecclesiastical and social life. During the following years, the Scandinavian population spread in different directions, especially to Wood Lake and Grantsburg, but also to West Sweden in Polk County, just south of Burnett County. New congregations with their own churches were eventually formed from the two original congregations. The area was periodically characterized by bitter disputes between the two persuasions, as well as of divided tendencies when new denominations appeared, such as the Seventh Day Adventists in Trade Lake.[7]

The emigration from Ljusnarsberg during the years of famine often lead via the mining and industrial areas of northern Michigan to Trade Lake, Wisconsin in its second phase. It exemplifies some well-known characteristics of the history of Swedish emigration. First, the importance of the impulses reaching the area at a time when emigration might be considered and were made a reality in an initial emigration wave. Second, the emigrants' early tendency to seek out areas with a similar industry as they left behind, which became especially natural in a case like this, when recruiting campaigns were in force to get workers in the mining industry to the mining areas in Michigan. Third, and finally, the common pattern emerges. When an emigration tradition is started at an early stage from an area in the native country, this area continues to have a strong emigration history. Ljusnarsberg became such an area, from where many people with Swedish background in America today derive their origin.

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[7] Hans Norman, "Swedes in North America," in *From Sweden to America. A History of the Migration,* eds. H. Runblom and H. Norman (Uppsala and Minneapolis, 1976): Hans Norman, "From Nerike to Wisconsin. Emigration of Baptists, Their Settlements and Congregations from 1868 to the 1920s," *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 49 (July 1998): 195-209.

An Improvised Meeting with a Database

Lars Ljungmark*

That Göteborg (Gothenburg) was the leading port of embarkation for the Swedes who emigrated to the United Sates is well known, but much less is known about the residents of Göteborg who joined this emigrant stream. To acquire knowledge of this, the project *Göteborgs-Emigranten,* whose purpose was to register the emigration from Göteborg, was begun in 1983.

To date the church records of almost all parishes in Göteborg, from the eighteenth century up to 1980, have been examined and almost 80,000 emigrants have been registered by name, age, date and place of birth, civil status, address, profession, destination, and date of emigration. Data from approximately 39,000 individuals who had emigrated up to 1930 formed the basis of a computerized database called EMIBAS-GÖTEBORG.[1] In 1996 this database (although incomplete) was included in the CD EMIGRANTEN, which was co-produced by *Svenska Emigrantinstitutet* (The Swedish Emigrant Institute), Växjö; *Emigrantregistret* (The Emigrant Register); Karlstad, and *Göteborg-Emigranten.* A new edition of the CD EMIGRANTEN that will be available in the fall of 1999 will include the completed EMIBAS-GÖTEBORG.[2]

This article presents a general summary of the emigration history of the citizens of Göteborg up to 1930. The data were selected from the completed database EMIBAS-GÖTEBORG and are presented in random order.

Number of emigrants. Up to 1868, 3,648 residents of Göteborg emigrated. That is 9.4% of all emigrants up to 1930. In 1868, one year before the first Swedish emigration boom, the emigration from Göteborg increased dramatically. During the years 1868-1873, 2,502 persons emigrated. Thereafter, the Göteborg emigration curve followed that of the country as a whole. Thus, the tide of emigration from the city came between 1887-1893, when almost one-

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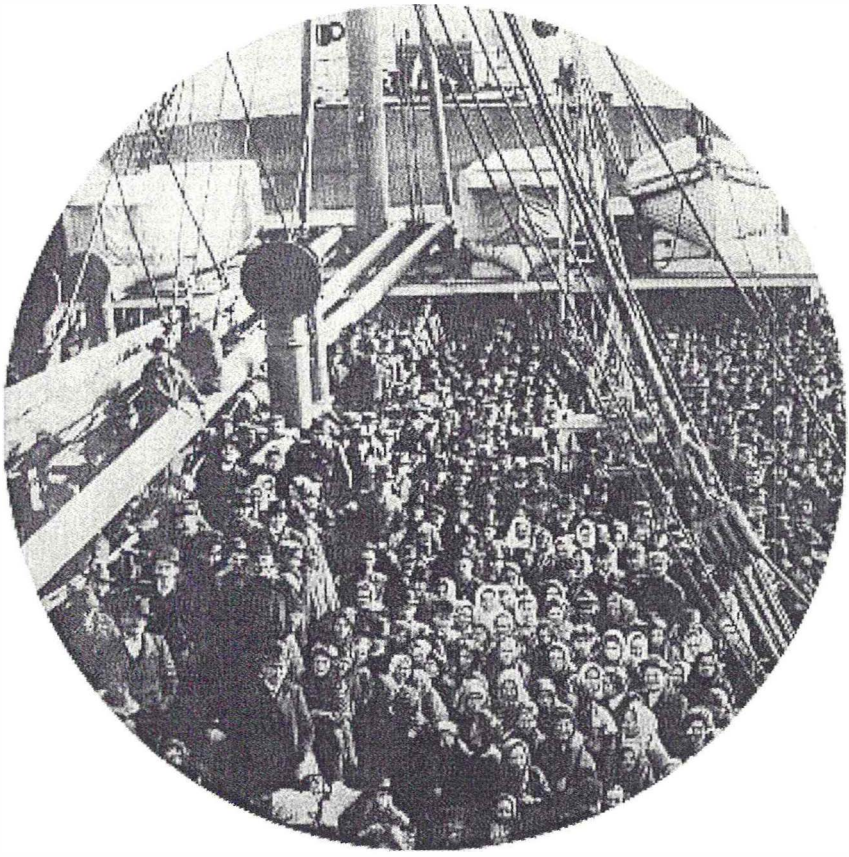
[1] *Datainspektionen,* a government body in control of all registrations in order to protect the integrity of individuals, has not yet allowed registrations from 1930-1980.

[2] See Per Clemensson, "CD-EMIGRANTEN Update," *Swedish American Genealogist* 19 (March 1999): 56-57.

quarter of all emigrants up to 1930 left. The emigration intensity (emigrants in relation to population) was almost always higher in Göteborg than in all of Sweden.



Destinations. In spite of the fact that the registration also covers the time before the mass emigration to America, the United States, with 64% of the emigrants, was the leading country of destination. The Nordic countries were the destination for about 23% of the emigrants, 11% each to Denmark and Norway and 1% to Finland. During World War I, the Nordic countries were the leading destinations. Two other European countries, Germany and Great Britain, were the destination for 5% and 3.5%, respectively, of all emigrants. Quite a few of those who went to Africa or countries in Asia were missionaries. Two persons went to the Swedish island of St.-Barthélemy in the West Indies. The first one

was Mademoiselle Väderlöf from Garnison (the Garrison) Parish who went there in 1786, only two years after Sweden had acquired the island from France. In 1827, Sergeant Carl David Lejon, also from Garnison Parish, headed for the island. Using the term "emigrants" for individuals who went to a Swedish territory is, of course, questionable.

Civil status and age of the emigrants. The Göteborg emigrants were mostly young adults, primarily unmarried men and women under the age of twenty-five who mostly traveled alone. The strong element of family emigrants so characteristic of the early phase of the Swedish emigration had no counterpart in Göteborg. In many cases the married man emigrated first, followed after some time by his wife and children. A close study of individual emigrants often shows that many of them were relatives traveling together on the same boat.

After World War II—a period not yet covered by the database—the family emigration became much more common. The Göteborg emigration was now dominated by refugees fleeing further west or skilled workers (who had been imported to Sweden in the late 1940s and early 1950s) returning home. Family emigration was also common among the Swedish-born emigrants who were more well-educated persons going to new jobs abroad.

Sixty-two percent of the Göteborg emigrants were fifteen to thirty years old. The largest five-year group was that including individuals between twenty and twenty-four years of age.

Sex proportions. For the whole period there was a slight dominance of women (52.2% females versus 47.8% males). Up to 1888, however, men were in the majority. Men also dominated the last emigration boom in 1923, which was caused by economic crisis accompanied by high unemployment. In this year, the many men going to the industries in the eastern U.S. and to the prairies of Canada outnumbered the rising stream of female emigrants from the shops and offices. The highest female dominance came during Work War I. In 1917, for example, 68% of all Göteborg emigrants were women.

Places of birth. It is, of course, quite natural that Göteborg ranks first among the places of birth, but the emigrants born in the city are not in the majority. Of the 28,002 individuals whose birthplaces are given in the records, only 38% are natives of Göteborg. This rather low percentage is, in fact, not so strange considering the great in-migration to the rapidly expanding city. One thousand six hundred eleven emigrants were born abroad—1,046 of them in the Nordic countries and most of them (548) in Norway. The 122 who were born in the U.S. illustrate the remigrants' uprooted situation. Most of them were children of emigrants who had returned home after some years in America. Now

they went back to America with their parents, who had become disappointed when the old homeland didn't correspond to the longings and expectations they had entertained during their earlier hard years in America.

Among the strangest birthplaces listed is "the Atlantic." That was the birthplace that Vesta Christina Åman gave when she emigrated from Karl Johan Parish to Glasgow in 1903. She was the daughter of Captain Henrik Åman and his wife, Hilda Maria Natalia, and the birthplace of 1876 was undoubtedly connected to her father's profession.

Occupations. The distribution of occupations is of interest when examining the social composition of the emigrants. The first impression is how the emigration is dominated by the lower classes, even when the database includes those who went before the start of the mass emigration in 1869. Only 10% of the 28,451 individuals whose occupations are given are outside the sphere of the unskilled workers. The single largest group included 5,385 domestic servants. They were daughters, both of farmers and of the rural and urban proletariat, who had worked as servants in the homes of the growing middle class in Göteborg. Here their working and living conditions were often hard. In America they expected a better life and better social status. The second largest female group was composed of 719 seamstresses.

Many emigrants had more than one title (i.e., occupation). They ought to have fit rather well in the often-varying labor market that was waiting on the other side of the Atlantic. The watchmakers in particular had varied occupations. We meet, for example, individuals with the titles "watchmaker and artist" and "watchmaker and physiotherapist" *(sjukgymnast).* An unusual combination was "tailor-police," the title used by Carl Fredrik Sjöbeck when he, together with his wife, Benedikte, went from Domkyrko (the Cathedral) Parish to California in 1874.

Four barons stand out against the gray emigrant stream and arouse curiosity. After analysis of the data, two sets of brothers (named Fleetwood and Örnsköld) enter the scene. During the years 1869-1873, they immigrated to different countries—the U.S., England, Scotland and Germany.

The court dentist *(hovtandläkaren)* is also interesting. The man with this imposing title was Baptist Bernhard Hybinette, who emigrated from Vasa Parish to France in April 1914 with his wife, Josine Maria née Rijkom.

In a time period that begins in the eighteenth century, many professions seem strange and are unknown to us. The lamppost lighter *(lykttändaren),* the greystone mason *(gråstensmuraren),* and the gypsum-smoker *(gipsrökaren)*

have all faded away. Really genuine titles from the western coast of Sweden include the ten "seafaring men" and the only "seafaring woman." And we all wish Hilma Lovisa Dahlgren all success. According to the church records of 1897, this eighteen-year-old who traveled alone to America had the title "crochets nice things."

Although this article has also dealt with emigrants with non-American destinations, it is natural that in Göteborg, the city from which more than four-fifths of all emigrants to America left their homeland, the emigrants to America are of special interest. The main purpose of this short presentation has been to introduce a new source for studying these emigrants.

All who are, or have been, involved in these studies are very grateful to Nils William Olsson for his interest in the story of the Swedish exodus to America. His ability to find emigrants both in Sweden and America is hard to surpass, but we hope that EMIBAS-GÖTEBORG will be a useful starting point for those who will try to follow in his footsteps.

Letters from Emigrants in the Archive of Bröderna Larsson & Co.

Per Clemensson*

In the years since the last publication of a report on the work of the Emigrants from Göteborg *(Göteborgs-Emigranten),* excerpts have begun to be made from letters in the archive of Bröderna Larsson (the Larsson Brothers) & Co., a large emigration agency that had a very active office in Göteborg. Our purpose to date has been to address a couple of questions: Were any people from Göteborg among the writers of these letters? and do any of the letters contain an account of leaving Göteborg, being in England, or of the transit to America?

My curiosity about the letters was awakened when, by chance, I found a letter with the following contents:[1]

18 April 1885

Respected Mr. August Larsson:

After I read in the *Svenska posten* [newspaper] that one can travel by way of Malmö to America without a certificate [*flyttningsbevis*] from the parish, I want to be bold enough to ask you if I can take the route from Malmö and then to America without a certificate.

Now I shall tell you, Mr. Agent, about my conditions. I am a married man and have such an awful woman that I can't continue living with her any longer. It is quite impossible for me and I'm thinking of going to America to get away from her. It is impossible for me to get a certificate from the parish, for I have been there and tried, but I get nothing out for she sticks her nose into it. Mr. Agent, please help me over, it would be very kind; and please let me know what the prices are.

What does it cost from Malmö to Nevvork [New York]; ditto from Nyverk [New York] to Sekago [Chicago]; ditto from Sekago [Chicago] to Michigan and Sjemnat äfven (?). Please give me information about the least costly route, while there are many young men due to be called up into the army who are thinking of travelling this spring. So now there is another

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[1] Note: The translator of this letter provided the following caveats: "Paragraphing and some punctuation added; spelling and other oddities not reproduced directly in the English."

thing. I have a ticket from America that is made out for the White Star Line and is valid from Göteborg to Michigan in America, but you can't go that way without a certificate from the parish and that I can't get from the pastor. The agent for the White Star Line is Mr. C. W. Hallström. So that way is shut for me. Now I would like to ask if it is possible for me to exchange this ticket and travel from Malmö on this ticket.

Dear kind Mr. Agent help me if it is possible so that I can travel that way on the ticket, even if I should rightly pay a little if only it worked. Mr. Larsson, if you cannot help me on your line, please be so kind and give me information if there is another agent in Malmö who can help me with the ticket. But be kind, Mr. Larsson. If it is possible to help me, I will pay and God will help him who helps me. Please do this Mr. Agent if you are kind.

I must now end my careless lines and ask to be excused if I have been so bold and give me information and reply by the first return post would be very kind of you so that I may know how this goes, but kind Mr. Agent, help me and I would be really happy and so write when I may travel, yes kind Mr. Agent be kind and fulfill my wish that would be really kind Is the request of

[Name suppressed]

A postage stamp is enclosed.
If the Agent writes [back] as soon as he gets this letter he would be kind.

The writer, whose name is suppressed here, had married for the second time in 1883 and, despite his efforts, remained in Sweden with his family. It is clear that without telling his wife he had made inquiries about emigration, for he gave his mother's address as the place where letters should be sent to him.

Imagine if many letters had such contents or were so specific! For then it would be possible to perceive emigrants' motives for travelling, their circumstances, the financing of their travel, events during the journey, and so on. Or perhaps letters like this could be found to refer to emigrants named in our database. The Göteborg Emigrants' register of letters gives, for each, the writer's name and address and, in summary form, the contents of the letter.

Mabel Hood and Dan Erneling have compiled the register. Their principal job has been to ambitiously and actively make excerpts from letters. They have so far covered letters from 1879 to about 1905. The Larsson Brothers archive was donated in 1956 to the County Archive by the owner—a farmer, Johan Gustafsson, of Björkvik, Sundholmen—on condition that it would be closed for research until 1970. It was designated C23.

The archive had been discovered in 1954 by Olof Thörn, fil.lic., in conjunction with research into material for a dissertation about emigration; he thus became the first person who could study emigration from the inside. In 1959 he published an article in *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* (now *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*). The archive subsequently became the principal source for Berit Brattne's doctoral thesis, "Bröderna Larsson. En studie i svensk emigrantagentverksamhet under 1880-talet" (Uppsala, 1973). Information given here is derived mainly from Brattne.

Thörn found the documents at the Prästäckre farm in Berghem Parish that had been owned by a relative of the Larsson brothers. The archive, packed in a number of boxes, had been put into one of the farm buildings there in 1919. In 1924 one of Samuel Larsson's brothers had expressed a wish that the archive should be burned, but it never was. In time the boxes got used for other purposes and the previous orderly arrangement of the archive was destroyed. The documents were spread out over the floor and destroyed, in part, through dirt and damp. Some that have survived are still illegible.

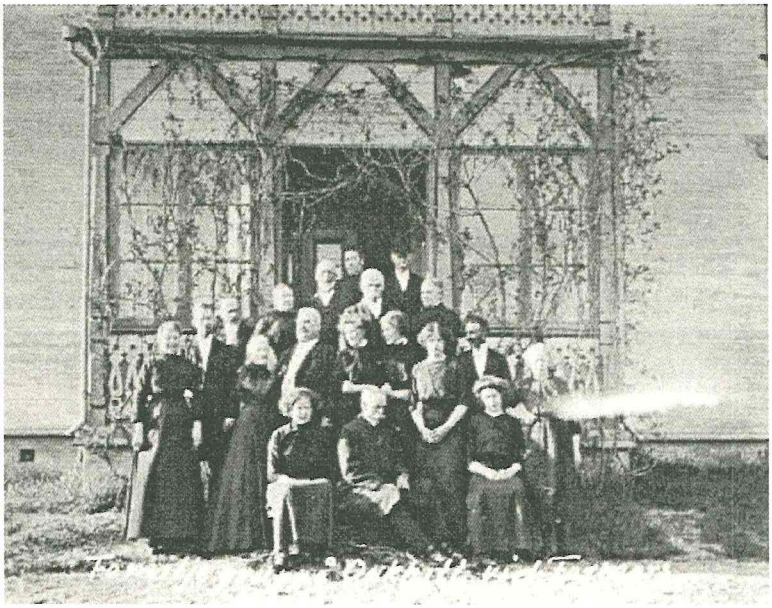
The archive has been put into order and listed by Josef Edström in the County Archive. This work was made possible by a grant from The Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints. The archive has also been microfilmed. Despite its earlier insecure storage the archive is very well preserved and, as the only surviving archive of an emigrant agency, it is unique. It derives from the time between 1873 and 1933. It comprises remains of the emigrant agency partnership's activity until about 1910; later it is of a private character.

The archive comprises the following series:

A. Copy books 1876-1922 (about 48,000 pages) with alphabetical indexes of the addresses.
B. Folders: lists of agents, lists of representatives, post books and the like 1880-1906.
C.I. Correspondence between the Larssons 1880-1910.
C.II. Letters from emigrants 1879-1910 (109 volumes; about 250 letters per volume; sorted by year and the initial letters of the writers' names).
C.III. Letters from Swedish companies and private persons 1876-1910.
C.IV. Letters from foreign companies and private persons 1880-1910.
C.V. Telegrams 1881-1910.
D. Documents arranged by subject, among them ticket stubs, emigration contracts, statistical information, documents concerning trade in butter, tobacco, snuff and coal, and organization.

E. Books of account 1873-1933: main ledger, journals, cash books, memorials, registers of bills of exchange, remittances of monies by emigrants.
F. Printed items, advertisements, and so on.

The five Larsson brothers were born in the parish of Berghem, district of Mark, Sjuhäradsbygden, and the province of Älvsborg. They were the sons of Lars Thomasson, a smallholder, and his wife, Brita Andreasdotter. When the father died at the age of forty in 1858, Brita was left to raise and support her sons—Johannes (b. 1845), Elias (b. 1846), Andreas (b. 1849), August (b. 1851) and Samuel (b. 1853).



The Larsson family at Berghem

Johannes took over the family smallholding and expanded it into a viable farm, thanks to his brothers' economic support. They, however, emigrated to America.

Elias left first. Despite having a meager education, he was hired by a colonial-goods company in London in 1864, for which he undertook a number of journeys. In New York he came into contact with an emigrant Swede, a

banker named Bo Christian Roos af Hjelmsäter. In 1873 Elias returned to Göteborg, where he registered a partnership called Roos, Larsson & Company.

This partnership shared office premises with the agent for a British shipping line, Guion Line, and through this contact, by 1876, Elias became the principal agent in Sweden for Guion Line. In 1878 the partnership was renamed Bröderna Larsson & Co., with the registered purpose of carrying on a trading and agency business. Elias's three brothers were later employed after they returned to Sweden.

Bröderna Larsson & Co. eventually had offices in Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö. In addition to representing the Guion Line, it also represented a number of other shipping lines, including Anchor Line, Beaver Line, American Line, Inman Line, White Star Line and the Dominion Line. Individually, the brothers were sometimes part of the partnership; all were engaged in the emigrant activity as well as the business activity. Besides his emigrant agency activity, Elias dealt with the import-export business, the discounting of bills of exchange, mining operations, and property dealing in Stockholm, where he lived after 1880.

The firm was divided in 1881. Elias F. Larsson maintained his business in Stockholm, August Larsson took up residence in Malmö, and Sam Larsson took charge of the Göteborg office. The Malmö office closed in 1892, when August Larsson moved to Göteborg. In 1907 Elias F. Larsson withdrew from the activity as emigrant agent; he died in 1931. Samuel Larsson died in 1936; Andrew in 1927; August had died in 1919.

The majority of the emigrants' letters contain questions about times, prices, travel routes, maps, safety at sea and so on. The archive contains a number of letters between agents and representatives about commission and other agreements. Many letters give reasons for emigration; some writers ask whether it is possible to travel without formal permission from the authorities. Many letters are about financial questions, how travel can be paid for, about free tickets and so on. Some writers ask about working conditions and whether there are chances of employment. Some letters express complaints about food and comfort, or about delays in England and New York.

Only a few letters contain accounts of the journey. Such data as exist are mainly given in connection with complaints. Letters from Göteborg are rare, and none have been found that describe embarkation in Göteborg. Less rare accounts include some of time spent in England and arrival in New York. It is hoped that, through registration, the letters will be more accessible for researchers.

The America Letter

Ulf Beijbom*

In the animated 1881 painting *Amerikabrevet (The America Letter)* by Jacob Kulle, the folklore painter from Skåne, the farmers have sent for the school-teacher to have the letter from the emigrant child read and interpreted. Father is listening with his hands clasped as if in devotion, but Mother listens without letting it interfere with her needlework. Most likely, it is one of the maids at the farm (or an adult daughter) who sits on the clothes-trunk at the end of the family bed and explains the letter to the youngest girl. The beautiful living room is charged with excitement, relief, and happiness that everything is working out so well for the farm's first emigrant. Maybe, in a few years, the young daughter, who listens with such a transfigured face, will become the next link in the chain that already connects this farm with the Promised Land. The captivating landscape of Skåne glimmers through the window. Soon it will be one of Sweden's many emigration districts.

I imagine that Kulle's famous scene is from the 1850s, when emigration was a new phenomenon and America a rather unknown concept to the peasants. If this is the case, *The America Letter* signifies the beginning of the unique era when more than one million people left their native country—from Skåne to Norrbotten; and from a lingering 1840s primitive economic society to the industrialism of the 1930s. According to Vilhelm Moberg, the emigration split the Swedish people into an eastern part, where people stayed home, and a western part, where people left for America. One can also say that the Atlantic split families and friends, who later had to depend on pen and ink if they wanted to keep in touch.

To us, in the present time, who try to look into the emigration era, the America letter serves as the storyteller of how ordinary people shaped their lives abroad. The emigrants' letters make up the first extensive source materials that have sprung forth from the people. The state church and regulations for elementary schools were responsible for the general public's ability to write, when the time came for the big break-up. While postage was long beyond the means of people in general, most people could afford to write letters from the years of famine in 1868-69, which marks the beginning of the Swedish mass emigration. Also, in America, postage for a letter equaled a manual worker's daily income. Karl Oskar's frustration over not having enough cash to pick up his letter from the businessman in Taylors Falls became history when the

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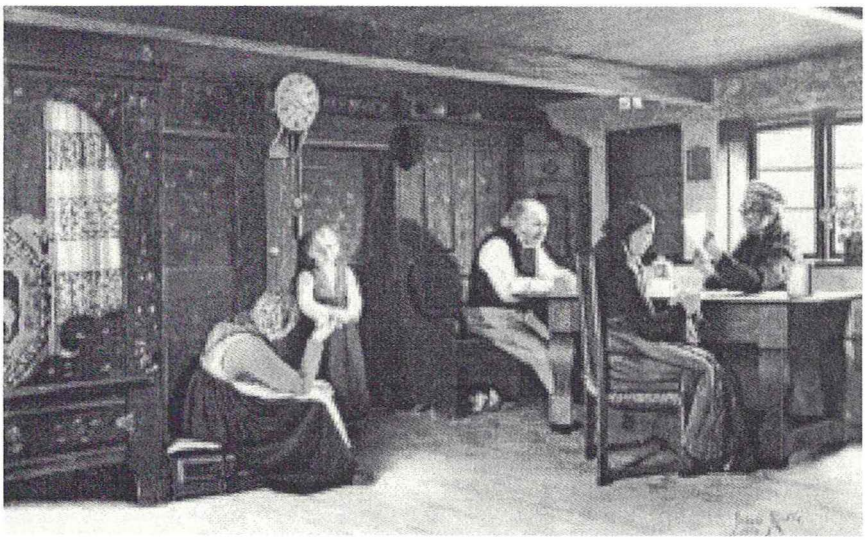
international postal union decreased the costs of postage considerably in the beginning of the 1870s. This gave wings to words, which could now fly across the Atlantic to comfort worried parents and young people suffering from America fever. Letters from Sweden traveled in the other direction—preserved only sporadically and never evaluated—with answers to the questions from those who still wanted to return home and wanted to know if everything was the same in the old country. In this way the letter became the fine lifeline between individuals whose lives were previously tied together but were now divided by two irreconcilable worlds.



Jacob Kulle, *Amerikabrevit (The America Letter),* painting from 1881. Photograph of painting courtesy of Swedish Emigrant Institute, Växjö.

All one can say about the number of America letters is that it must have been enormous! The Danish postal service's statistics of international letter packages 1872-1914 give us an idea of the magnitude. According to this unique source, close to two million letters were received during one single year in Denmark, a country that was insignificant in the emigration movement, especially compared to Sweden. Assuming that several million America letters were sent to Sweden each year between 1880 and 1914, the total number must be astronomical. Despite the fact that the letters were treated like treasures for a long time, most of them were lost, when the time came for distribution of estates and cleaning up of attics. Only a few percent of the treasure of letters were saved. At the Swedish Emigrant Institute, for example, about 30,000 America letters probably comprise the largest collection in the country. However, one consolation is that most of the letters still are to be found outside

of the archives, that is, with private people who it is hoped will allow their America letters to end up in the Swedish emigration's national institution in Växjö some day.

It seems that emigrants wrote most of their letters soon after arriving in America. Later, the letters became less frequent as individuals were absorbed into American work and life. The Danish emigrant researcher Kristian Hvidt, who has studied the letters' statistics, is of the opinion that the enthusiasm for writing was dependent upon the state of the markets, in that more letters were written during the good years than during the bad. On average, the Danish emigrants wrote four letters a year between 1875-1914. According to Hvidt, the signals that encouraged emigration decreased or ceased in relation to times of economic decline, when the emigrants chose to be silent instead of confessing that the emigration appeared to be a mistake. For those who still heard their parents' words of warning in their ears, it was certainly difficult to confess to defeat!

It is not easy for today's reader to peel off the layers to the core of the America letter. This is because most of the letters offer stereotyped and awkward reading. Most of those who wrote had never before attempted to describe happenings and feelings in written words. After just a few short years in school, they had not used a pen to write much more than their signatures. It was solely for the need to keep in contact with friends and relatives on the other side of the ocean that their hands, unfamiliar with writing, picked up a pen. Writing a letter was a difficult task for manual workers and the letters and words were formed in agony. Swedish spelling and sentence structure were not made easier by the English language buzzing in their ears. It sometimes would take weeks until the letter was ready to be sent off on its long journey in the opposite direction of the emigration. And it was read and marveled over in the gray cottages! In order to put together an answer, the addressee had to bring out the guide to letter-writing book or engage a writing assistant as depicted in the painting by Kulle. This was the case, especially in the beginning of this remarkable time, when the two Swedish parts of the population—those who sat at home and those who traveled to America—wrote letters to each other.

The America letter remains sealed to those who are not able to acquire an insight into the environment of the writer and the reader. In order to do this, one has to struggle through an entire series of letters; for example, a decade of successive letters to a relative or a heterogeneous collection of letters that has developed at the local archive. The few researchers who have compiled and analyzed America letters, such as the Americans Theodore Blegen and Arnold Barton, the Swede Albin Widén, the Dane Erik Helmer Pedersen, or the Norwegian Orm Øverland, are all of the opinion that they document self-experienced history. Even those who consider the letters subjective and containing very little, cannot deny that the writer stood in the middle of his own life. Irrespective of the time interval, the letters provide direct glimpses into the emigrant's life. Historians' traditional sources, such as statistics and printed

material, don't go very far; but, when supplemented with America letters, the individual's reality can begin to be reconstructed.

The immediacy of the letter made it an unbeatable emigrant recruiter. The America-fever was frequently spread by the letters, because they were considered reliable. They had been written by friends and relatives who supposedly didn't lie to those at home. The trustworthiness of the authors of the many emigrant guides and books about America during the time of the emigration was another story, as was the trustworthiness of the authors of the well-worded letters published in the newspapers. Here it was often suspected that the motive was to make money on behalf of the emigrants or to attract them to various colonization projects. The emigration industry may have been behind the pens of many seemingly normal America letters. When, for example, the state governments of Wisconsin and Minnesota tried to organize the immigration, they used the immigrants' natural wish to be united with their closest relatives. This was done by engaging famous Swedish-Americans like Colonel Hans Mattson, who was hired by the Minnesota Board of Immigration in 1867, and later by various railroad companies that wanted to colonize the areas around the railroad. In 1871, when the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad came through areas that had been farmed by Swedish pioneers since the 1850s, Mattson started handing out money for the expensive postage. The only thing he asked for in return was that the "Karl Oskar generation" would tell those at home about their success. In this shrewd way, the population numbers of "America's Småland," Chisago County, and "America's Dalarna," Isanti County, were reinforced.

Archivist Steinar Kjaerheim, one of the editors of the Norwegian national archive's publication of Norwegian emigrant letters, believes that the America letters written during the pioneer period served as countermeasures to the often anti-American press. Orm Øverland thinks that Norwegian peasants received more dependable information about the land in the West thanks to America letters than the more educated readers, who most often fueled their anti-American prejudice with strongly biased travel books. This was also the case in Sweden, where the popular network of letters brought America into the manual laborers' homes, while the conservative picture of the world, with its German overtones, remained the guiding star for the group that governed and controlled the country. Because of circumstances like these, Minnesota was better known than Stockholm in Vilhelm Moberg's Småland. Øverland's observations are also relevant to Sweden, when he points out that the successful emigrants are overrepresented in the preserved material of letters. The reason for this might be that emigrants born to succeed were also more verbal. Also, positive letters were more often saved than those that conveyed discouragement and pessimism.

During the time of the pioneer emigration, which was so important for future development, the letters often had an official tone because the writer addressed a considerably larger readership than the addressee alone. Despite the personal introductions such as, "Beloved parents and sisters and brothers.

Prosperity and God's protection, spiritually and worldly, are my biggest wishes for you," the pioneers' letters were often intended to circulate among the neighbors, to be read at the market, printed in the newspapers or even form the basis of "reliable" emigration guides.

Geskel Saloman, *Utvandrare anländer till Göteborg (Emigrants arriving to Gothenburg),* oil painting from 1872 copied by Gunnar Johansson. Courtesy of Swedish Emigrant Institute, Växjö.

All this was true for Peter Cassel, from Kisa in Östergötland, who founded the first Swedish colony west of the Mississippi in 1845 and later wrote many tempting letters from Jefferson County in Iowa. The long epistle published in our second oldest emigration guide, *Description of North America's United States* (Västervik, 1846), was undeniably intended for all those in the home district who were inclined to emigrate. "A Swedish farmer, brought up in oppression and familiar with distress and need, finds himself as if moved up into another world, where all his previous confused understandings of a better life more in conformity with nature's laws all at once become reality," observed Cassel. The founder of New Sweden, Iowa, also promised to assist the emigrants in a practical way: "If you inform us beforehand about your departure from Sweden and the approximate time of your arrival in New York, one of us will meet you in this City and accompany you the entire distance here." The letter was written the ninth of February 1846. On the fifth and twelfth of August the same year, about one hundred people from Östergötland disembarked in New York.

The wish to convince people back home to follow is just as obvious in the correspondence made into a system by the prophet Erik Jansson and his proselytes. In spite of the fact that the first colonists in Bishop Hill, Illinois, suffered from famine, cholera and death, Anders Andersson from Torstuna began a letter in 1847 as follows: "I pick up the pen, touched by the spirit of the Lord, as I consider how God has blessed us hundred fold here in the new land, both in spiritual and bodily good, compared to what we owned in our native country. . . So here we have purchased property that couldn't be exchanged for a fourth of the entire country of Sweden."

The leader of the first-known group of emigrants who unquestionably met at Åkerby crossroads, Magnus Jonasson from Kuppramåla farm in Linneryd Parish, wrote a comprehensive America letter on 26 October 1852, shortly after his arrival, which without doubt was intended to be read aloud to the people of stony Kronoberg, who wanted to know more about the possibilities in the West. The "real" Karl Oskar tells about taking a homestead just south of Chisago Lake consisting of at least one hundred acres of tillable land that he regarded "as much more advantageous than all four parts (farms) in Kuppramåla." The farm land is "unbelievably fertile and rich and consists of black topsoil with clay bottom without any rocks, somewhat hilly, no fertilizing." The recommendation to follow can be clearly read between the lines in the epistle that is proudly signed by "Farmannen (the farmer) Magnus Jonasson, Chekago-lek, Tälersfall, Mennessotta, Nord Amerika."

The praises of the farmers' possibilities in the Promised Land flow like a stream of honey through the period of homesteading. In a letter from Stockholm, Kansas, the day before New Year's Eve 1892, C. A. Liljegren painted the following picture of his domain: "The other day I went and inspected my land, and I was almost tired after walking from one end to the other and the reason for my tiredness was probably that I began to think of all the work required to plow such an area of land."

A farmer from Värmland reported from Holmes City, Minnesota, in the 1880s that "it doesn't matter what one sows and plants, one doesn't have to fertilize. . . . We have 80 acres of land, but it's only flat country. . . . we have been very successful with the cattle; we have never been without milk. . . . we have three cow-calves, we have butchered one of them, and then ten chickens. We recently butchered a fine pig. The firewood is right by the house." The same enthusiasm radiated from the farmer Paul Södergren's letter from New Sweden, Maine, in 1883 to "Honored Relatives and Friends in Stamgärde." After giving a detailed description for the Jämtlanders at home of the year's plentiful harvest, he concludes by noting that "if I was offered free travel to Undersåker to live and reside, I would refuse."

Other testimony in letters must have influenced the majority of the Swedish people under forty who were considering emigrating. "Here is a good land for

poor people if they conduct themselves well" (1905). "Here is free land to be had for nothing by anyone who wants it. It is like the song: America is a free country where no king exists and no petty clergymen" (1894). "You see, the farmhand is allowed to eat at the same table as the family" (1884). "The country is beautiful, if any country in the world deserves such a description. And if one compares the conditions here with those in Sweden, there are no similarities at all. But I certainly could not have made the kind of money in Sweden that I have made in this short time" (beginning of 1880s).

Even if some uncritical naiveté shines through such quotations, the most unrestrained optimism is quickly subdued by critical opinions—to conceal the truth in an America letter was synonymous with dishonesty. Therefore, there are also words of warning and descriptions serving as deterrents. "You'd better believe it's been difficult for us," wrote one woman from Texas in the 1880s to her sister. She continued: "It is true that this was the case many times in the beginning. . . . It would have been hard for me many times if Fred hadn't been so kind. I know that when I needed money for food and living he gave me all that he had." The sense of not belonging in a callous and money-fixated immigrant country shows in Anton Petersson's letter from Iowa to Beloved Sister and Brother-in-law: "But you must consider that it isn't any better for us who live in a strange land among strangers and mostly opportunists. Who hardly hold anything for holy if there is money to be made. . . . Many times in my loneliness I have thought about the past and many tears have run down my cheeks, not less bitter because they were seen by none" (1897).

In a letter to their sisters, the brothers Karl and Fredrik complained about the bad times and the lawlessness in New York: "We can barely make enough for food, so you should know our wallets aren't bursting with money. I place my wallet under my pillow every night so I don't need to worry if burglars come; there are plenty of burglars. Here, they murder people almost in broad daylight. There have been two murders since we arrived, one on the same street where we live, and here they hang people who have done something bad" (1879).

The desire to emigrate probably wasn't stimulated by letters where the emigrant asked for money from home either—an overdue debt, an inheritance, or a call for help from the destitute. "It would be good if you could send me some money, because I am now too old to do any kind of work," wrote a recently widowed woman to her niece in 1894. The Skåning [native of Skåne] Oliver Nelson in Cambridge, Minnesota, tried for many years to free his claims in his home area. The money was needed for the development of the farm. He wrote: "I have begun to work up my farm or land and have so much to do at home that I hardly can go away to work for money" (1869). All the expenses that followed the generous offers of the Homestead Law, including free land, are explained in detail by a farmer from Småland in 1882: "A pair of oxen cost about two hundred dollars and one should have two pairs for a plow, that is four hundred dollars, a plow 25 dollars, a wagon 75 dollars, a cow 35 dollars, these things are

necessary to start farming, this is 535 dollars, or 2,000 crowns in Swedish money. . . . Then there are many other machines here that a farmer should own, such as a reaping machine, sowing machine, mowing machine and a rake." One can hardly get any closer than this to a homestead owner's financial agony!

The trip across the Atlantic, which was often dreadful for the landlubbers, was often described in the emigrant's first letter home. An expressive example of a letter about seasickness would be the detailed letter about the misery written by the emigrant sister of Vilhelm Moberg, Signe, which became the basis for the scenes showing seasickness on the brig *Charlotta*. "As I have now experienced the trip to America, I can inform you that there is nothing to brag about," Johan Carlsson verified tersely, before he painted the following unpleasant picture: "It was a horrible sight when everybody had their heads in the aisles in nausea and vomit" (1869). This letter was also rounded off with a reassuring statement that the trip is now only a memory that will fade as a new life begins.

The readers' sympathy for the Promised Land may also have been subdued by numerous accounts of the incompatibility of the English language—only the prophet Jansson's disciples and those surrounding Danjel in the novel *The Emigrants* believed that they would be able to speak English fluently at the time of arrival. A maid in Minneapolis told her sister in 1888 that the hardest time "is the first half-year when one does not know the language." The language difficulties were made considerably easier by the helpfulness of the surroundings, according to Johan Carlsson in Oakland, Wisconsin: "The language is not a problem here in America, there are many Swedes and Norwegians here so when the Englishman hears what language one speaks, he learns to adapt his speech so we understand each other's meaning" (1869). In an undated letter, a maid notes that it is "much nicer to speak English than Swedish and it shouldn't be too difficult to learn now that it doesn't sound so funni" [*sic*], which she proves with a few lines in English: "I can say that we *häfd Swid parti last Sandi najt and de must fun we was nott mor and two girls but latse boys o wi just meck fam for erve day*. I will end with many dear greetings to you greet mother and father and everyone I know. Signed by Emma Anderson."

Because women often wrote, the America letter is our best source of information about how the emigrants experienced the family and home life. The farmer's wife's hard work is pictured in many letters. For example: "I wash clothes for other people almost every day all year, but I have several little ones and a lot to do, as you can understand. . . . I sew all the children's clothes and knit everything for all of us, both for our hands and feet. . . . I have washed clothes for other people every Christmas Eve . . . and on the day after Christmas I usually iron clothes" (1913).

A growing number of single young women were drawn to "American families" in Chicago, Minneapolis, New York and other magnets for girls,

where the "Swedish maid" became the trademark for dependable and cheap help in the home. However, from the girls' perspective, the conditions were fit for a queen, with their own rooms, days off and, on top of that, good wages. Because the most attractive maid positions were in the city, the daughters of the country and small towns often became city people. This was particularly noticeable in Chicago, where the big Swedish colony was characterized by a surplus of women for long periods of time. From 1880 at least every tenth maid in Chicago was from Sweden and, at the turn of the century, 62 percent of America's 57,000 working Swedish-born women worked as maids or waitresses.

The female emigrants, who were bullied in their home country, became busy writers of letters, openly encouraging their sisters at home to follow them. The greetings from America's "Swedish maids" are probably our best example of the America letter's power as emigration recruiter. The letters' reliability was raised above all doubt for the female readers, who wanted to leave milk stools and domination by master farmers. These letters were written by close acquaintances and could hardly be questioned!

The sensational facts that the hired girl could quit her position at any time and draw weekly wages are discussed in a letter from a woman from Västergötland in 1891: "I still have the same position as I took before Christmas. Here, it is not like in Sweden that one has to stand (stay employed) until the end of the year. Here, no one has to stand more than a week if no one likes it. Here, one is paid at the end of the week." The generous wage conditions inspired Mina Wibeck in Chicago to write the following extravagant wording in a letter to her sister Cari in Västervik (1871): "A woman here can do rather well with her own earnings support herself and her husband without the husband's earnings. Because this is what I have done ever since I came here."

The light duties of the maid are apostrophized several times in the many letters from Lina Eriksson, a farmer's daughter, to her parents' home in Bräkne-Hoby in Blekinge. For example on 10 December 1882 she explains that men's lives are harder than women's in America and further notes: "the girls here have good lives. I shouldn't complain because I couldn't have it any better, we are three maids so we have a lot of fun. I have even been to the circus and looked around and have seen many nice things since I came here." In a letter written by Lina a few days later, the maid's position is praised in the following passage: "I certainly don't have much to do here compared to a maid in Sweden. . . . there are positions here where the maids live very well, yes, like the most distinguished ladies."

It must have been considered unbelievable by readers, who were pushed around by stingy employers, that a maid enjoyed Sunday and Thursday afternoons off and also was left to herself and enjoyed a warm and nice home. "My employers went out, so I'm in charge here now," begins a letter from Elisabeth Lindström in Brooklyn to Gertrud in Hofors in 1914. In a later letter

she jadedly notes that "today is Sunday again, so I'm as free as a bird and have nothing else to do than write."

The enthusiasm from the "Swedish maids" in the cities was sometimes replaced by discouraged, sometimes bitter outpourings. The letter writers' sense of not belonging in an environment where danger might lurk in the street corners could be noticed between the lines. Many girls had the misfortune to end up working for demanding employers. Klara Andersson in Chicago wrote the following to her sister in 1883: "Well, you'd better believe that I work harder here than I ever did before so I'm sweating profusely, that's what you have to do when you come here."

Also the young men's work and living conditions are outlined in the treasure of letters from America. It was common that newly arrived young men went to work at the enormous railroad construction sites. Others were recruited to working teams in the big forests. The continuous demand by the construction industry made even more young men into city people. The necessity to save cash for investments also forced many farmers to accept seasonal work of various kinds.

Frank Pettersson writes in 1882 about the hard life of a greenhorn in Minnesota who neither knew English nor had any professional skills: "You wonder what kind of work I do, I work at the railroad at Kennedy, a station south of Hallock and a day's wage is one dollar and 65 cents a day and board costs $3.75 a week. . . . we are six men and mostly Swedes but have an English foreman so I learn how to speak English here." Young John A. Andersson, who together with a friend worked hard for a mining company in Colorado, found an expressive way to describe the hardship: "We hardly think about girls now, much less see any, but we are paid well here, so we'll have to hang in here until spring at least" (1887). Andrew Melin in Spencer Brook, Minnesota, also had a hard life: "As you have heard, we have been in the timber forest this winter. We finished there in the middle of March. This was hard work, because I was new and was hired by the toughest driver (foreman) in this county (Isanty) [*sic*], he had two camps, or *kojor* in Swedish. There were 14 men in each camp."

In this way, it seems an endless number of stories and feelings can be found in the deep well of America letters. Sometimes, the fates of the emigrants covering several decades will emerge to the persistent reader. Some successions of letters stretch from generation to generation and prove the durability of the chain stretched across the Atlantic by the emigrants. However, the majority of the wealth of letters provide only glimpses into the life of the emigrant. The letter writer emerges partly in sporadic letters, and then he or she is again surrounded by the silence of history. If one attempts to lay a mosaic picture of such pieces, however, a timeless and deeply human picture of breaking up from the old and adjusting to the new emerges. With the America letter in hand it is

possible to perceive, like the King of Flowers, Carl von Linné, did, how the general picture is depicted in the seemingly unimportant and insignificant.

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A Returning Shoemaker

Lennart Limberg*

In the spring of 1998 some articles about Swedish-Americans in the Midwest were published in *Göteborgs-Posten,* the leading newspaper on the western coast of Sweden. The articles prompted Hugo Schöllin to write the following letter to journalist Karl-Erik Magnusson:

> I read your article about the emigration to America, and I now ask if the enclosed photos and documentation might be of interest to you.
>
> The shoemaker, Frans Oscar Karlsson-Schöllin, was born in 1858 near Kumla and emigrated around 1875 to Chicago. He was first employed in a factory and you can see him pictured together with several Swedish mates. Later he opened (or bought) a shoe shop and then spelled his name Schelein according to the pronunciation.
>
> Schöllin returned to Sweden around 1910 as a well-to-do man. He bought a house at Motala and started as a specially trained shoemaker producing riding boots and boots for ladies. The latter were tight and long, with 14-centimeter high heels and 120 eyelets. He had customers from the capitals of Europe and from Hollywood.
>
> Schöllin died at the age of 75 in Jönköping in 1933, and with him one of the last specially trained shoemaking craftsmen.
>
> Hugo Schöllin,
> stepson of F. O. Schöllin

Enclosed in the letter were three photos showing Schöllin outside the Chicago factory, his shop in Jönköping, and an example of his spectacular boots for ladies. Karl-Erik Magnusson handed over the material to our research project *Göteborgs-Emigranten.* I decided to find out if this shoe-maker, Frans Oscar Karlsson-Schöllin, could be further traced in the sources.

As a start, I called the writer of the letter, Hugo Schöllin, asked for an interview, and was given some further details. Frans Oscar Schöllin died on 4 January 1933, when he was seventy-five years old. Therefore, his year of birth was estimated by his son to be ca. 1858. Hugo also told me that, after his return

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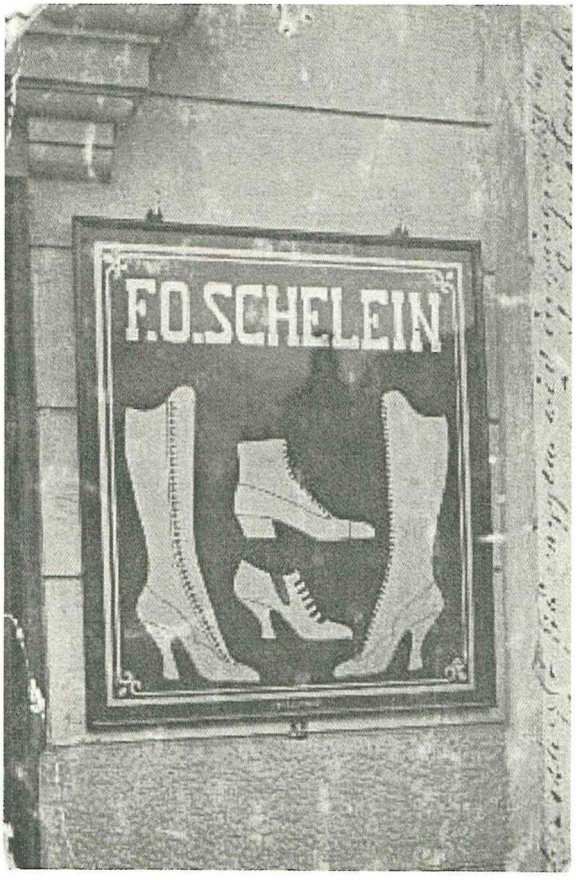
to Sweden, Frans Oscar first lived at Kungsgatan 15 in Motala, before he bought Villa Fridhem at Skolgatan 2 in the same town. On 14 May 1921 he married his housekeeper, Ester Cecilia Palmqvist, who was born 21 April 1894 in Frinnaryd Parish (Jön.), Småland.

In 1925 the family, now comprised of Frans Oscar, Ester Cecilia, and Hugo (born in 1915; living with them since 1918; and adopted right after their marriage), moved to Jönköping. A shop was opened at Storgatan 88 and Frans Oscar's craftsmanship gave him many international customers. Besides the fancy ladies' production, Frans Oscar delivered riding boots to the officers of the local artillery regiment.



The silhouette seen in F. O. Schelein's sign may be the tower of the town hall (in Chicago?).

So far we only have the memories of Hugo Schöllin. If we want to find out more specific details about the returning shoemaker, Frans Oscar, we must use various registers in Sweden.

Archive Registers

If we start with the fact that Frans Oscar died 4 January 1933, we can check this with Kristina Parish in Jönköping and find that the date of his death is correct. There we also learn that Frans Oscar moved from Motala to Jönköping 10 November 1924, together with his wife, Ester Cecilia, and foster son, Karl Hugo. Frans Oscar's date and place of birth are also given—2 March 1857 in Svennevad Parish (Öre.). We are also told that his adopted son's mother was Johanna Helena Pettersson, who was born 20 March 1895.

Perhaps Frans Oscar had a good reason to adopt an illegitimate child. When we turned to the provincial archives at Motala to ask for the records of Svennevad Parish, the entry of Frans Oscar's birth on 2 March 1857 tells us that he was the illegitimate son of "pigan Carolina Jansdotter" at Baflinge.

A good source of information is the household examination roll *(husförhörslängd)*. We ordered it from Svensk Arkivinformation [SVAR], the Swedish Archive Information service. In the household examination roll for Svennevad Parish covering the period 1856-1860 we learn that Carolina Jansdotter was born on 6 February 1836. She moved to the farm Baflinge in 1855 and had an illegitimate son who was born 3 March 1857 and christened Frans Oscar on 24 April.

We can trace the life of this little family through the subsequent records. In 1858 Carolina and her son moved to Fogelhult to live with her brother, the crofter Jan Erik Jansson and his family.

In the household examination roll covering the period 1861-1865, Frans Oscar is now called Carlsson, the mother's family name is still Jansdotter, and her second illegitimate child, born 25 May 1865, is called Johan August Schöllin.

In 1867 Carolina moves to the small farm Johannisberg to live with the bricklayer Johan August Schöllin, born 24 August 1821 in Örebro. They are blessed with two more boys: Eberhard Mauritz Schöllin, born 7 November 1867, and Edward Schöllin, born 24 September 1869. Finally, Carolina is married to her bricklayer on 9 February 1870 and two more children follow: a daughter, Beda Serafia, born 8 January 1874, and a son, Karl Otto, born 31 March 1875.

In the next volume of records, Frans Oscar Carlsson is raised to stepson *(stjufson)* and in 1875 he moves to the nearby farm Bäcketorp, where he is registered as a farmhand *(dräng)* and finally gets rid of the mark "*oä[kt]a*" (illegitimate child). He is now eighteen years old.

In the household examination roll for the period 1876-1880, Frans Oscar is still at Bäcketorp registered as a farmhand. We further learn that he was vaccinated against smallpox, that he was able to read and had an understanding of the Christian faith, that he came to the Holy Communion 26 August 1877, and that he fulfilled elementary military training in 1878 and 1879.

The next volume informs us that Frans Oscar now entered a new phase of his life. He is registered as a "Baptist" and had moved to the nearby town of Motala on 21 November 1881. He is twenty-four years old.

In the CD EMIGRANTEN, the Swedish emigrants are listed, and in Emihamn we find the large groups leaving Sweden from Gothenburg. There we find Oscar Schöllin from Motala emigrating on 8 February 1889, with the destination listed as Jamestown, New York. His age was given as thirty-one.

Administrative Records

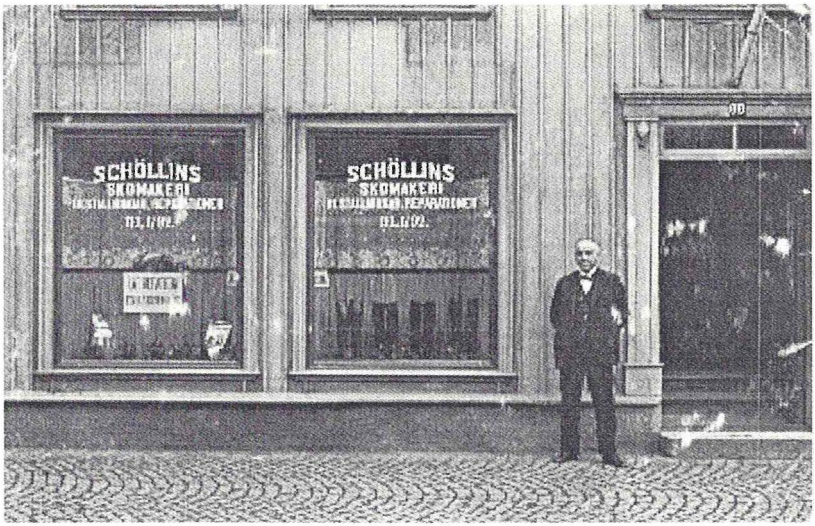
From the County Court of Jönköping we can ask for the inventory *(boupptеckning)* following his death. After a telephone call, this was sent to us. It shows that the assets were totally balanced by the debts. The direct heir was Ester Cecilia and it was also stated that Frans Oscar had half sisters and brothers "unknown to numbers, names and places of dwelling."

A testament is quoted in the inventory giving the surviving wife full right to all assets. This testament was signed at Motala on 14 August 1922 by Frans Oscar Schelein and Ester Cecilia Schelein. The American spelling of the name was obviously kept some years in Sweden. In brackets under Frans Oscar's name is added that he officially was registered as Karlsson Schöllin.

From a photo in the family archives of the son, Hugo Schöllin, showing the shoemaker shop in Jönköping, we can see that Frans Oscar, after 1924, advertised himself as Schöllin. When Ester Cecilia signs the inventory, she is also Ester Schöllin.

In the inventory no house is mentioned. According to the son, Hugo, Frans Oscar bought a house when he came back from America and settled in Motala. He gave the impression that he also bought a house when he moved to Jönköping. Telephone calls to the local land registers *(fastighetsregistret)* in

Jönköping and Motala confirmed that Frans Oscar Schöllin never owned the houses at Östra Storgatan 88 in Jönköping and Skolgatan 2 in Motala.



Schöllin's shop in Jönköping. The window signs read: Schöllins / Skomakeri / Beställningar. Reparationer. / Tel. 1792 (Schöllin's Shoemakers Workshop / Orders. Repairs. / Telephone 1792). The man in the photograph is one of Frans Oscar's assistants.

Return

It was then time to find out when Frans Oscar actually returned from America and settled in Motala. The parish register did not indicate Schöllin as a newcomer around 1910, when he was supposed to have returned. However, he was registered in Motala on 2 November 1921, when he moved in from Frinnaryd Parish, together with his wife, Ester Cecilia, and his foster son, Karl Hugo Pettersson. I further learned that Ester Cecilia was Frans Oscar's second wife. He was registered as a widower (or divorced) since 11 June 1897.

In the parish register of Motala were two addresses: Bispmotalagatan 15 and then Kungsgatan 5. Was Frans Oscar owner of any of these houses? Another call to the Land register gave a negative answer.

A major question remained to be solved. When had Frans Oscar returned to Sweden? The parish register of Frinnaryd was consulted, but he only lived there for one year. In 1920 he had moved there from Motala.

The friendly and helpful personnel at Motala parish office finally found the entry proving Frans Oscar Schöllin's return from the U.S. In December 1899 he came back to Motala and again he is registered as a "Baptist." Furthermore, it is stated that he "has been living in North America" and "is lacking proof of freedom to marry" *(saknar betyg om hinderslöshet),* which might indicate that he had been married in America.

He lived at several addresses in Motala before he moved to "Villa Fridhem" (on Bispmotalagatan 15) in 1914, a house that he later acquired in 1917. In 1918 the foster son Karl Hugo moved in with Frans Oscar and perhaps this made it necessary for him to marry.

Conclusion

This short essay, tracing the life of a returning emigrant, is written to demonstrate two things. Firstly, any family tradition may be false. In the case of Frans Oscar's story, told by his son, only the date of his death was correct. We had to verify his date of birth, the year of emigration, the year of return, and the addresses where he lived in Motala.

Secondly, my investigation is a good example of how accessible the source material is in Sweden. By obtaining material from SVAR, from the County Court, and from several telephone calls, I easily traced Frans Oscar through his whole life. It would be interesting to ask what can be found of him in Chicago.

Two examples of Schöllin's fancy boots for ladies.

Swedes on the *Titanic*: Some Glimpses

Claes-Göran Wetterholm*

Där var folk från alla kanter
Svenskar, finnar, engelsmän
Och av dessa emigranter
Säg, vem känner alla dem?

There were people from all countries
Swedes and Finns and English, too
But of all those emigrants
Tell me, where did they all go?
—Swedish *Titanic* song published 1912

While the sinking of the *Titanic* is the most well-known of all shipping disasters in the annals of maritime history, it is, perhaps, less well-known that Swedes and Swedish-Americans represented the third largest passenger group aboard the *Titanic*. Almost one-third of all third-class passengers came from Scandinavia and Finland.

The Swedish *Titanic* passengers were a representative cross section of the different types of emigrants. Some were seeking a better life; some were leaving Sweden because of the lack of freedom; and some were simply returning home after visiting relatives in the old country.

Although stories surrounding first-class passengers and their accommodations are most familiar to us today, it is important to remember that the *Titanic* was built mainly for the lucrative emigrant trade. Even third-class passengers were well taken care of, because the White Star Line, the owner of the ship, knew well the importance of satisfied customers who would not only return but also recommend others to travel with the company's ships.

Most of the Swedish passengers left via Göteborg on 5 April 1912 aboard the Wilson liner *Calypso*. Although few records exist for this particular departure, one traveler bound for America wrote these lines:

> Ten o'clock at night we left the quay in Gothenburg with the big and steady North Sea steamer *Calypso*. It was so late at night you couldn't see any familiar faces from the ship. Most certainly I, too, had someone there waving to me. Oh how they cried and how they were waving from the ship and from the shore. At least 3,000 people had gathered. At the moment the

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* Claes-Göran Wetterholm is one of the world's leading experts on the *Titanic*. His book *Titanic*, published in 1988 (Second Edition, 1996), is the only book ever published about the third-class passengers. He is currently working as historian for the great European *Titanic* exhibition.

ship started to move, a Swedish-American began to sing the hymn "Shall we gather at the river." They sang under tears both from the ship and the quay.

Some did travel via Malmö and Copenhagen instead, and among these were Alma Pålsson and her four children. The youngest, Gösta, was only two years old. Alma's husband, Nils, had left two years earlier and had managed to raise money for the family's tickets working as a streetcar conductor in Chicago.

Edward and Gerda Lindell, also leaving via Malmö, were seeking a better life in the New World. Edward had been working for four years in the shoe factory in Ramlösa, located in the province of Skåne in southern Sweden. Edward wanted to go to America and Gerda could see no reason why she couldn't go with him; so they left.

Edward and Gerda Lindell. Courtesy Gunilla Genrup. Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.

The North Sea has a notorious reputation for storms and bad weather, and the travelers from Göteborg were more than happy to finally see land and the city of Hull on the English east coast. They boarded the London train and to many the sight of such a large city was breathtaking. From London they were

transported down to Southampton and the ships for which they had bought their tickets. But here there was a big surprise awaiting many of them—their ships were cancelled.

A strike in the British coal mines had deprived the shipping companies of coal. The White Star Line and other companies had to cancel trips and stop their ships. There was one ship, however, that was to leave because of a special occasion—the *Titanic* was embarking on her maiden voyage.

"As mother came to pick up our tickets the man told us we had been transferred," Beatrice Sandström later recalled. Her mother Agnes, her sister Marguerite, and herself were going back to San Francisco, where Hjalmar was waiting for the family. He had no idea his family was on the *Titanic*. The man giving Agnes the tickets reassured her: "You don't have to worry ma'am, because this ship cannot sink."

Beatrice Sandström. Courtesy Karin Breman.
Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.

The Lindells were very impressed. "We have been down to watch the Beast." The ship was simply enormous, and "Beast" was the closest Gerda could come in describing the ship in the postcard to her parents.

Mauritz Ådahl, from Asarum Parish (Blek.) in southern Sweden, was disappointed. He had arrived in Southampton on 5 April only to find that his ship, *Philadelphia,* was not leaving. He could have stayed a few more days to enjoy the family. However, the stay in America was only to raise money enough to build a house for Emily and the daughters. "Yes, my little darling, I dreamt of all of you at home and was just so surprised to wake up and discover I'm so far away."

August Wennerström, on the other hand, was more than pleased to leave the Old County. He was a socialist who was known by the nickname "The Yellow Fear." His name really wasn't Wennerström, but rather, Andersson. In Copenhagen he had obtained a false passport and a friend, Ivar Vennerström, gave August the new name without even knowing it.

Wednesday, April 10, was the scheduled departure day. In many emigrant hotels and "emigrant homes" people had been gathering, and they now all headed to the enormous ship in the harbor.

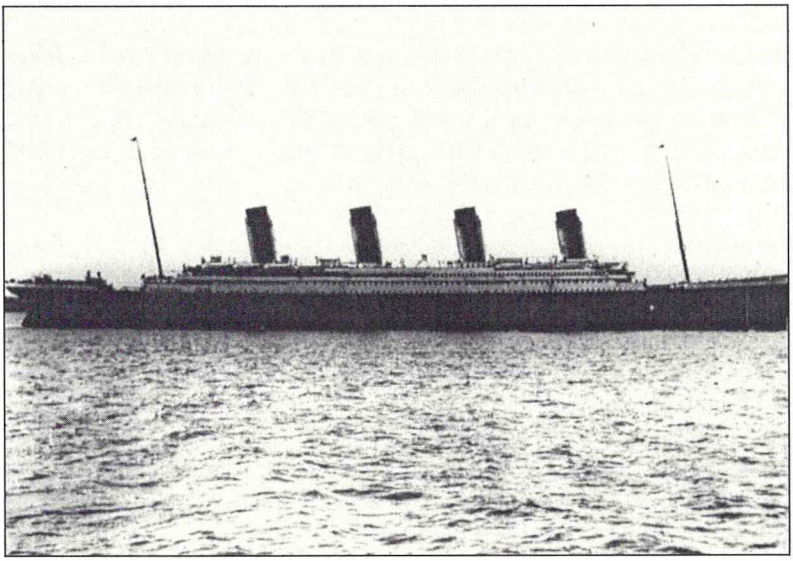
Titanic was, at the time of her maiden voyage, the largest ship in the world. Although her slightly older sister ship, the *Olympic,* had been surpassed by the *Titanic*, they were actually twins with very slight differences. Had the *Titanic* not sunk, just a month later she, in turn, would have been surpassed by another ship, the *Imperator,* in Germany. The fierce competition between the shipping lines forced bigger and bigger ships to be built.

The lifesaving rules, on the other hand, were completely outdated and very few of the liners crossing the North Atlantic before the *Titanic* had lifeboats for everybody aboard. This didn't concern the travelling public too much; they just demanded even bigger, faster, and more luxurious ships.

Axel Welin, a Swedish engineer from Stockholm, had much earlier understood the dangers associated with having insufficient lifesaving equipment, and designed a new type of davit. The *Titanic* could have carried at least thirty-two (and up to sixty-four) lifeboats; but, because the law did not demand more than a certain number and because lifeboats were expensive, it was decided to cut the number down to twenty lifeboats for 1,178 people. This was actually more than the law required.

And so the *Titanic* left. She headed for Cherbourg on the French coast and Queenstown, the port of Cork on Ireland. There were finally 2,207 people aboard, 898 of whom were members of the crew. "Here are people from all countries," Carl Robert Carlsson had written on a postcard to his father, Emanuel, in Vessigebro (Hall.) on the southwest coast of Sweden. "The boat is

so big she hardly moves for waves as big as houses," he continued. "You might think the trip is hard and boring but had I known everything would go so well, I would have brought Anna along. Adieu." Anna was his sister, but it is doubtful whether he actually meant that. He was escaping the military service and, just like August Wennerström, he had bought a false passport in Copenhagen.



Titanic *in Queenstown 11 April 1912. Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.*

The third-class passengers were, as much as possible, divided into their different nationality groups. Families and women travelling on their own were quartered in the stern section of the ship; single men in the forward section. They had their dining saloons in the middle of the ship on F-deck and a long corridor, popularly called "Scotland Road" by the crew, connected the bow and the stern. The general room and the smoking room were under the aftermost deck, the poop deck, and there was a piano there as well. Although a brochure for the *Titanic* boasted about an orchestra playing, this was exclusively for the first-class and second-class passengers. The third-class passengers had to entertain themselves. And so they did.

Selma Asplund said it was awful. She, her husband Carl, and their five children had tried to settle in Sweden after living some years in Massachusetts, but they couldn't find their old roots and so decided to return to Massachusetts. Carl at times thought the trip was unbearable: "[I]t's awful as it is. Since we left

England they've just been drinking, dancing, and playing cards," he remarked to Selma. "If this goes on, well it's going to be the last trip we make over the Atlantic."

The third class had its open promenade space forward and aft on the ship. The boat deck was strictly for first class and second class and there were barriers and guards to make sure no third-class passenger trespassed. Even if they had been allowed up on the boat deck, they probably wouldn't have found their way. The *Titanic* was an enormous steel labyrinth, and an experienced sailor, like Second Officer Lightoller, was almost two weeks aboard the *Titanic* before he found his way without any trouble.

On Sunday, 14 April, a good number of ice warnings reached the *Titanic*. One of the last warnings, however, was never delivered. The wireless operators were so busy they couldn't leave their station, and a vital message warning about ice and icebergs in the *Titanic's* direct path was left on the desk in the Marconi station.

As the sun set and stars began to twinkle, the temperature dropped considerably. It became very cold and there was even a fear that the freshwater tanks would freeze. The stars were shining bright, the sea was a dead calm, and it was finally like running over a mirror. Mother Nature had prepared an incredibly beautiful setting for the tragedy that would soon come.

Agnes Sandström had put her daughters to bed. She was sitting on her bunk talking to her cabin mate, Elna Ström. Elna was going with her daughter to her husband in Indiana. As they were to leave Sweden, Selma had scalded her arms and their departure had been delayed. They came to travel on the *Titanic* instead, and now Agnes and Elna talked of going up on deck. "As we sat there talking there was a bump, something was hitting us. We couldn't understand that at first but then later on they came to tell us the ship had hit an iceberg, there was a hole but it would soon be fixed, and then we would be under way again."

There was certainly more than a hole. With her 46,000 tons, the *Titanic* had smashed sideways into an iceberg. The iceberg didn't cause a gash, only smaller holes that were strategically located. About ten seconds after the first impact, *Titanic* was more lost than a derelict wreck. Three hundred tons of water entered her hull every minute, but her pumps were capable of pumping out only one hundred fifty tons per minute. All that could be done now was to keep the ship afloat long enough to save as many lives as possible.

The stewards in the different classes were told to keep their passengers as calm as possible. In the confusion that arose, some obviously took this order too

seriously, with the result that doors to the third-class quarters were closed and guards put out to ensure that nobody entered where they weren't supposed to enter. Thus, the majority of the passengers were locked in on a sinking ship as the lifeboats began to leave.

Agnes Sandström gathered her children and, accompanied by Edna Ström and her daughter, began the long walk up to the boat deck. Some stewards had now been ordered to guide third-class women and children up to the boats, but there were over seven hundred third-class passengers, many of whom where in family groups. In such a chaotic atmosphere it was hard to keep the men behind.

Alma Pålsson was told to dress and bring her children, with life jackets on, to the boat deck. She was travelling alone with her children, and to properly dress them all seemed to take an eternity. She used far too much time! In order to keep them happy, she brought her mouth organ.

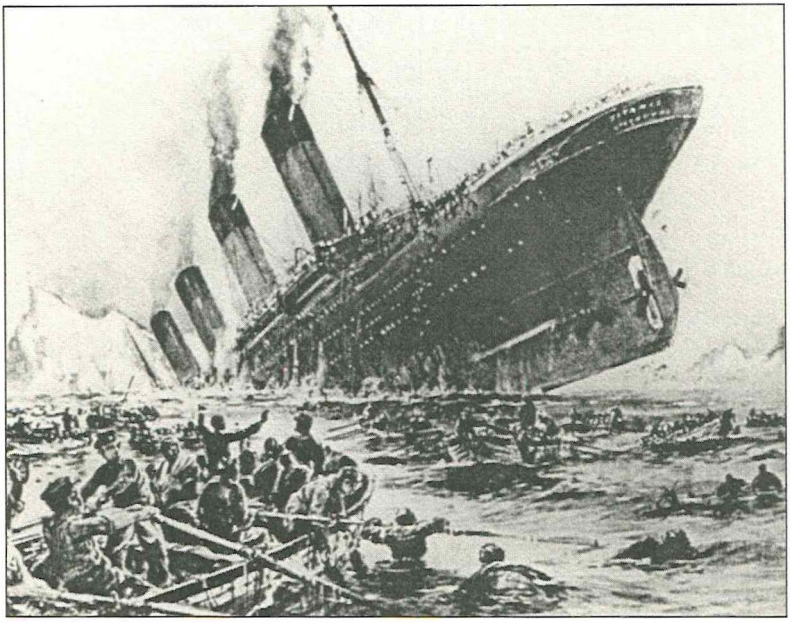
August Wennerström didn't really take the situation seriously. At one point, he and some other Swedes danced around some other third-class passengers, who had put on their life jackets. In the beginning it all seemed just fun.

As the *Titanic* sank lower and lower, bow first, in the sea, the reluctance to step into a lifeboat disappeared. But many still refused to believe or understand. Agnes Sandström finally reached the boat deck. She thought that the Ströms were behind her but, as she turned around, they were gone and Agnes never saw them again. "As I came on deck there were ropes everywhere, ropes, ropes, ropes. I sat down on some ropes and said to myself 'I'm fed up. I can't do it any longer.' But our cabin steward saw us and told us to go to the lifeboat. He first helped the girls into the boat and then me."

She was in lifeboat 13, one of the last to leave the sinking ship and one of the few to be loaded to its full capacity. As soon as the lifeboat entered the water, the sailors began to row in order to get as far away as possible from the sinking *Titanic*.

Selma Asplund later said they had decided to die together. She was standing at one of the last lifeboats when, suddenly, seamen grabbed her daughter Lilian and threw her into the boat. Then Felix, the youngest boy, was thrown down too. Selma was very upset. She turned to her husband and asked him why he had done that. From the boat sailors were crying "Bring the children's mother down! Take their mother in the boat too!" Instantly she was thrown into the boat. As she looked up, she barely had time to see Carl and her three sons rush to the other side. They wanted to find another boat.

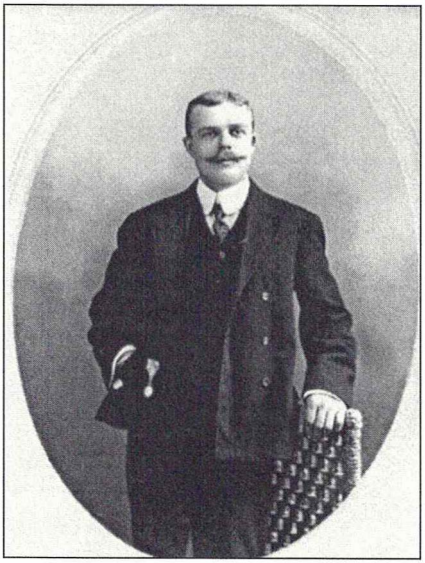
As the last lifeboat (boat D) left, there were still around 1,500 people aboard the ship. Among them were Alma Pålsson and her four children. Because it had taken her too much time to dress the children, she had missed the boats. She met August Wennerström and begged him to hold one of the children. He tried to help her, but at the same time the bridge area where they were standing quickly sank and a large wave carried them all into the water.



Titanic *sinks. Illustration by Willi Stöwe. Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.*

Wennerström lost the baby but managed to swim to a collapsible lifeboat (boat A). It was full of water and some one hundred fifty people fought around it. Wennerström finally managed to climb into the boat together with a few others, among them Edward Lindell. His wife, Gerda, was in the water without a life jacket. Wennerström tried to hold on to her but eventually lost his grip, and she immediately disappeared. Her hands were cold and her fingers were much thinner. As Wennerström lost Gerda, her wedding ring slipped silently into the bottom of the boat. "The bodies floated so tight together you almost thought you could walk upon them and in our strange little craft one after the other fell down and died." Wennerström later recalled that Edward Lindell had lost all power and, in front of Wennerström, his hair had turned white. He then died. Lindell's body was thrown overboard to keep the lifeboat afloat.

Mauritz Ådahl did not find room in a lifeboat. He jumped into the water with his life jacket and minutes later he froze to death. His body was later recovered by the cable ship *Mackay-Bennett*. His watch, which was found in a pocket, had worked fourteen minutes after the *Titanic* sank. It had stopped at 2:34 in the morning of 15 April 1912.



Mauritz Ådahl. Courtesy Hjördis Ohlsson.
Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.

The *Carpathia* arrived around four o'clock in the morning and picked up 712 survivors. But 1,495 people had died! The largest and most modern ship in the world had disappeared, and with her the belief in safe technology.

From the water-filled lifeboat A, eleven men and one woman had survived. They eventually climbed into another lifeboat, and boat A was left to drift with three bodies. Almost a month later, the boat was found by White Star Line's *Oceanic*. The bodies were buried at sea, but the boat was recovered. In the bottom of the boat a ring was found. The ring was brought to New York, where it was established that it was a Swedish ring. The ring was then forwarded to the Swedish Consulate in New York, where it was established that the ring belonged to Gerda Lindell. Since she was dead, the ring was sent to Stockholm to the Foreign Office, which sent it to Malmö, where Gerda's father claimed it. The ring has since been a treasured artifact in the family.

Alma Pålsson's body was found. She was well dressed but her four children were all gone. The body of a young boy, about two years of age, was also recovered. The seamen aboard the *Mackay-Bennett* were so moved by the little boy that they decided they would pay for his gravestone. Although there is no name on this gravestone, it is dedicated "To the memory of an unknown child." Later it has been assumed that this is Alma's youngest son, Gösta Pålsson. By a strange coincidence, his grave and Alma's grave are located one and one-half meters from each other.

Alma Pålsson and three of her four children. Photo © Claes-Göran Wetterholm Archive, Stockholm.

August Wennerström survived and lectured about his experiences from the *Titanic*. The former socialist later formed a company of his own and settled in Culver, Indiana, where he lived until his death on 11 November 1950. On his gravestone he kept his assumed name—Wennerström.

Of one hundred twenty-three Swedish passengers, eighty-nine died and thirty-four survived. The calamity had an enormous impact on an entire generation of Swedes and the interest in the *Titanic* seems to be as great today as it was in 1912.

The Swedish Maid: Her Own Story

Elisabeth Thorsell*

My paternal grandmother, Alma Carolina Svensson, was born in 1867 in a mining farmer's *(bergsman)* family in Nordmark in eastern Värmland, just outside the little town of Filipstad. She had an older brother, Carl Victor, born in 1865, and a younger sister, Nanna, born in 1872.

Alma married a mathematician, Albert Carlsson, who was employed first as a teacher at Lundsberg, one of the few boarding schools in Sweden, and later at the State Board of Pensions. They lived mostly in Stockholm. Nanna, who never married, worked as a housekeeper and also kept a little home in Nordmark, but spent most of her winters with Alma and her family in Stockholm.

The brother, Carl Victor, remained on the family farm and continued with other family business. After inheriting another farm in nearby Färnebo Parish, he moved from Dahlen in Nordmark to Lersjöed in Färnebo around 1912. Carl Victor was married twice. His first wife, Maria Sabina Persson, died in childbirth in 1898 and left him with two little children, Anna (born 1896) and Carl (born 1897). In 1910 he married his housekeeper, Hilma Larsson, by whom he already had two children, Maja and Hilda. Later Einar, Elis, and Hugo were born. Unfortunately, Carl Victor died in a horse-and-buggy accident in 1915, and left his older children orphaned.

His oldest daughter, Anna, was by then almost twenty years old, and she felt it was about time to leave home. Even though the time for making a big decision about emigrating seems to have been less than ideal—it was the middle of World War I—Anna left for America in 1916, one of 671 emigrants from Värmland and 7268 emigrants from the whole of Sweden that year. Anna traveled with her friend, Hilda V. Alfredsson from Nordmark, who was a year older and had a special reason for buying a ticket for McKeesport, Pennsylvania —her fiancé, Gustav, was already there!

Anna soon moved to Hartford, Connecticut, an area where she was going to spend the remainder of her life. Around 1921 she married a fellow Swede, Folke

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A. Heline, who had a small mechanical workshop, and, in a few years, they were able to buy a home on 51 Acadia Street in West Hartford. Their marriage was blessed with a son, Allen, born in 1922, and they seem to have lived a very ordinary life. Folke died in 1972, Allen in 1974, and Anna in 1988. Allen was married and had a wife, a son and two daughters but, unfortunately, contact with them has been broken.

Anna went back to Sweden once, in 1921. When she returned home to Hartford, her younger sister, Hilda, who was born in 1906, accompanied her. Anna often wanted to return to Sweden for a visit, but it never happened again. Her husband Folke did come to Sweden in the 1960s, and my father, his brother, and my brother Erik visited them once or twice in West Hartford. Letters over the ocean evidently were the main contact link.

During her first forty-six years in the United States, Anna wrote regularly to her Aunt Nanna; at least three or four times a year and even more often during the first years. Nanna kept all of Anna's letters, probably more than two hundred in all, as there was obviously a strong attachment between Auntie and her niece. (What has happened to Nanna's letters is not known, but they are probably gone, as the younger generation did not speak Swedish). When Nanna died in 1963, my father, who was a genealogist and did not throw anything away, inherited her little house, with all of its contents. Later everything was passed on to me, so all of Anna's letters are now in my possession. I have started the long process of sorting and transcribing them, and have found them most interesting, as they describe the experiences of an ordinary young girl, with only basic schooling,[1] as she grows to become a Swedish American and adjusts to life in America.

As mentioned above, Anna left Sweden in 1916, and is found in the Göteborg Passenger Lists as having sailed from Göteborg on 5 October with a ticket for McKeesport, Pennsylvania. In her first letter to Nanna, dated 29 October 1916, Anna wrote:

> Well, now I have arrived and all went well. We came to New York yesterday; then we went by rail in the night and arrived here at 8 o'clock in the morning. Everything went rather well. If only it had been better on the boat; there the conditions were bad. But that is done now, and I will never go back, unless I can travel second class, and anyhow it will be some time, of course. It is no use to say anything until I find out how I like it here, but I imagine I will find it good. That is what I think now, anyway. I am happy I

[1] This is clearly evident in her original letters, which contain many long, run-on sentences. In the English translations presented herein, basic punctuation marks (periods, commas and semicolons) have been added to enhance readability.

> am here now, Auntie, and if I don't like it here I can always go back. It is curious how many regulations there are to get here. At first in Kristiania one has to stand for hours and wait; then we had to see a doctor; then after much toil we got onboard the boat; then we got seasick, which was terrible; then we had to land in Kirkvald; and then we left there and at last we got to New York in the morning. There we had to go to a place where the customs were and then by a ferry to Ellis Ejland [*sic*], where the emigrant office is. There we had to go one by one and without the hat on. Well, that was a funny ceremony, but I did not think they were very careful, not with me. They just looked at me, and then I could leave. But they do make you run around a lot. It is a big house, like the Natural History Museum in Stockholm, and they want you to go upstairs at one end and downstairs in the other, and then they put a tag on you, so you don't get lost. Well, it amused me. It will be very nice to sleep in an ordinary bed; last night we slept sitting straight up [in the railway car].

Anna did not stay long in McKeesport. Already in early November she had gotten a job with an American family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She wrote the following to Nanna on 9 November 1916:

> As you see, I am now in Pittsburgh, and have been here for almost two weeks. It is now three weeks since I arrived in America, but I think the time has passed quickly. I like it fine here, as I want to tell you, Little Auntie, and it is a good thing that I do not feel homesickness, as that would not be good for me. I have a place in an English family of two people. I can't talk to them, but I manage very well anyway. I am starting to understand the old lady, so it probably won't take long until I can learn the language. When you don't hear anything else, it is more quickly done. I earn $5 a week, which is not so much, but you get more when you can talk a little. Yesterday Hilda Axelson from Tången,[2] you know, went shopping with me. I bought a new robe or "dress" as they call it here, and boots and some other stuff. Hilda is really kind, you know, as I can't go shopping by myself, because I can't speak English. It is not as in the old country. Today I have been doing nothing since two in the afternoon, and they are not coming home tonight, so I am free this evening. And yesterday I was free from noon until this morning and the whole of Sunday, when the old ladies cook themselves. There is a law in this country that the girls shall have one Sunday or Thursday free every week. There are big houses, real skyscrapers, downtown, but we don't live there, as it is mostly businesses.

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[2] A girl from Nordmark, who emigrated in 1913.

> Nordiska Kompaniet[3] is just nothing compared to this. I have written to Calle [her brother] to come here. It would be fun if he also came. Please ask him to try; it would be much better for him.

Anna stayed on for a while in Pittsburgh and wrote again on 26 November 1916:

> I have now had this place for a month, and it has been a real short month. I have now earned $20. That, dear little Auntie, is more than 70 *kronor,*[4] so if you could save a bit, it would be a good thing. There is so much that glitters in your eyes, but I won't buy everything I see. I was going to send you $5, but I can't send it myself, as then I would have to go to the post office, which I can't do on my own. And in a letter it feels unsafe, but next time you hear from me, then! I will put $1 in this letter and see if you get it. I am waiting to hear from you at home, but it takes so long. Maybe you did not write until you heard from me that I had arrived, and then it will take another few weeks until I get a letter. Please write to me now and then, so it won't take so long until I get a letter. Don't be sad that I left home. I am very well here and have a nice mistress. I get good food and I do the cooking myself, believe it or not. Cooking the English way is much simpler than the Swedish way; much easier. And I don't have to work much. I almost feel reluctant to take that $5 every week, but that is the way of this country. The mistress feels she is well off. And they like the Swedish maids; the English are no good. Well, this is all for today. I might be going to Hartford soon.

Anna moved to Hartford, Connecticut, on 9 December 1916. She did not write her aunt again until 17 January 1917:

> I've got such a good place here, at one of the dormitories of a boarding school; a bit like at Lundsberg at home, and I don't have to do any heavy work and I have spare time to sew and write. My salary is now $6 each week, and that is not so bad. You can imagine that there are no boring days here; the students sing and play all day long. The lady who is in charge of this dorm is a Swedish lady, Miss Anni Snygg of Göteborg.

Anna stayed at this place until the end of the term. She then got a new job at a resort, Pine Orchard, which enabled her to spend the summer by the ocean,

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[3] Nordiska Kompaniet's present building in Stockholm opened in 1915 and, at that time, was considered very grand.

[4] According to Lars Lagerqvist and Ernst Nathorst-Böös's book *Vad kostade det* (1984), a maid's wages in Sweden in 1915 were 720 *kronor* for a year, including her room and board.

where she took care of two little boys, John and Shepard. There were many other Swedish maids working at this resort and they had a lively social life, as soon as they got off work. On 5 August 1917 Anna wrote:

> I have had my first proper letter from Calle now, so I wrote him yesterday. He says you are waiting to hear from me. Well, it has been two or three months since I wrote to you, but nobody has written to me either. Well, that happens when you have been here for some time; you are not as eager to write home as in the beginning. If I am to tell the real truth, several days can pass without a single thought of Sweden. But when I sit down and think of you all at home, then I wish I could go home and see you! Some of my friends here in Pine Orchard are Catholics, but I never think about that. In Sweden they do believe that Catholics are different from other people.

Anna stayed in Pine Orchard until September. In a letter dated 30 August 1917, she had some thoughts on what she wanted to do next:

> I plan to go back to Hartford in a while. I have not yet decided. I had a letter today from the lady I had my place with last winter. I might get back to her or maybe not. The Americans pay you more. Thank you dear Auntie for taking care of my bicycle until I come home again.

Anna went back to domestic service in Hartford, Connecticut, and on 24 October 1917 she writes:

> I wish I could come and visit with you, and we would have many cozy visits. Yes, I am here in Hartford, have my health and feel good, but I am so lonely. I don't have a special friend, but it is okay, as long as you don't lose your good spirits. Well, I have been here now for a year, so it will pass. I like it here in Hartford; it would be a shame to say anything else. [We] have so much fun. We are some young folks that always go together. And we have some dances every week. You should see how many people come there, all of them Swedes. It is real music too, not accordions, but a real orchestra. Now I can tell you that it starts to be as in Sweden. This week they could not buy as much sugar as they wanted, and it will last for six weeks. You know we have to send supplies to Europe. Is it true that there are hard times in Sweden? It is real starvation, if you are to believe what you hear. I cannot believe it is so bad, as that would be awful. Please Auntie, when you write to me, then tell me the real truth about how it is now. I know that the times are dear, but if there is nothing to buy, I do not know. If that is the case I wish with my whole heart that I had all of you here, as here it will never go as far as to starvation, and I cannot believe that

of Sweden either. Well, when you get this it is Christmas, but maybe you have nothing to enjoy if you do not have any food.

On 18 November 1917 she once again wrote to her Aunt Nanna:

This afternoon I have been to see a girl across town, and then we went to church. It is a big shame that this was the first time I went to church since I came here to Hartford, and I have been here a year now on 9 December. Next Thursday, the last Thursday in November, is a holiday. For the Americans, this holiday is a bigger occasion than Christmas. It is called Thanksgiving. Then they have turkey in every home, which is just as necessary for them that day as it is for us Swedes to have lutfisk at Christmas. Do you know that the only thing I know about, clothes, have gone up in price; almost double since last fall. A dress that I paid $11 for then, now costs $20. Isn't that terrible? I get paid more now ($8 a week now and $5 then). I am trying to save money, but it is difficult, believe me.

At this time, World War I continued in Europe. On 29 May 1918, approximately five and one-half months before the war ended, Anna wrote:

Isn't this war something frightful. You should be here and read the papers; every day there are listed many names of those that are killed "over there" and always many Swedish names as well. Here there are at least fifty Swedish boys that I am more or less friendly with, that have left. Some of them are very sad, and you cannot wonder at that, [since] they are almost certain never to come back alive, or otherwise with a leg or an arm gone. Several have tried to go back to Sweden, but not succeeded. It does not seem possible. I am really happy that Carl never came here, aren't you? Now it is evening and I have cooked, eaten and washed up. We always have dinner at night in this country, both the gentry *(fint folk)* and workers. We had a steak and potatoes, spinach, bread and butter, preserved plums and cake for desert today, and that was a real simple meal. As you know I have changed my place again; here is only the Mr. and Mrs. in the family, and I do all the work alone, except the laundry. Let's see how long I will stay here, as you have more time off when you are a single maid, so in that way it is rather good. Otherwise I like jobs better where I do not have to cook. I can't cook much, but I will learn if I stay on here. Tomorrow is a holiday in this country (Decoration Day), when all factories are closed and all the stores, and they are a bit festive. I don't know yet what fun I will have; hope something will turn up before tomorrow afternoon. There is a circus in town this week, but I would rather go to the pictures. Maybe there is a dance in one of the parks in Hartford, or something. I am rather tired of all the

dances, because that is what I have been doing the whole winter—gone to dances about three times a week.

In August 1918 Anna changed place again, but now she stayed almost one and one-half years with the same family. They paid her $45 a month. She left there in October 1919 for another domestic post, but did not stay long. She now changed to factory work and became a tester at a typewriter manufacturer, where she typed a little test on every machine to see that it worked properly. She seems to have stayed there until she went back to Sweden in the summer of 1921. In October 1921 she returned to Hartford, with her sister Hilda, and never visited Sweden again.

Two bathing beauties on the beach in 1924. One of them is probably Anna, the Swedish maid.

Alien Registration in Minnesota, 1918: Swedes in Waseca County

Ronald J. Johnson*

Beginning with the very first issue of the *Swedish American Genealogist,* Nils William Olsson has led the way in locating and extracting naturalization records as sources of information about Swedish immigrants.[1] In this journal he and others have published coast-to-coast examples of the usefulness both of the declaration of intention to become a citizen—the "first papers"—and of the final naturalization records in tracing Swedes and other Scandinavians.[2] Not every immigrant, however, became a citizen or began the process by taking out first papers. But for those immigrants living in Minnesota in February 1918 who were not (yet) naturalized, the state's Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings form provides an alternative source of valuable personal data that in some respects goes beyond what is to be found in even the most complete of naturalization records.

The Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings form was a product of the fear and hyper-patriotism fostered by the entry of the U.S. into World War I. In April 1917, the Minnesota legislature created the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS), endowing it with broad, dictatorial powers, later characterized as "martial law in bureaucratic form," to support the war effort.[3] Among other activities, the MCPS launched a loyalty campaign, which included shaming aliens who had delayed naturalization, and mandated the registration not only of German male aliens, as required by the federal government, but of all aliens as well.[4] MCPS Order 25 of 5 February 1918 decreed that all resident aliens fourteen years of age and older were to register with their local governmental unit during "Alien Registration Days" on February 25 through 27.[5]

The requisite document, the Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings form, compelled aliens and native-born spouses of aliens to swear to the truthfulness of their responses to thirty-five questions about themselves, their

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families and their property. The form asks for (1) full name of the registrant; (2, 3, 4) address and length of residence at that place; (5) age at last birthday; (6) country of allegiance; (7, 8) place and date of birth; (9, 10) port of entry and date of arrival in the United States; (11, 12, 13) marital status; (14) literacy in English; (15, 16) occupation; and (17) names, ages, and school status of living children. Questions 18 through 21 focus on the war, inquiring about male relatives serving on either side in the war, and whether the alien has registered under the draft or claimed exemption from military service. The next three questions zero in on the individual's alien status: (22) has the registrant ever taken out first papers? If so, when and where?; (23) why haven't second papers been completed?; and (24) If first papers have not been taken out, why not? Items 25 through 35 demand detailed information about the description, value and date of acquisition of the individual's property holdings, including farm land, city lots and other real estate both within and outside of the state of Minnesota; stocks, bonds, securities; property held in trust for the registrant or by minors for whom the registrant is a guardian; and personal property such as cattle, sheep, horses, autos, and farm machinery. The form concludes with inquiries about whether the registrant has sold or transferred property since the United States entered the war with Germany (34), and the location of the registrant's safety deposit box, if any (35).

While compliance with Order 25 may have been less than complete,[6] some 225,000 aliens were registered.[7] These original forms are housed in 47 cubic feet of records boxes in the state archives at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. A personal name index was compiled on 3" by 5" cards between 1979 and 1995, filling 124 card file drawers. The cards are arranged alphabetically, by surname and given name(s), and record the county and civil subdivision (township, village, lumber camp, or city, with ward and precinct numbers where applicable) in which the form is filed.[8] In 1996 both the index and the original forms were microfilmed and are available in that form at or through the Minnesota Historical Society Library. The index consists of 48 microfilm reels and the forms themselves take up 394 rolls of film.[9]

With the exception of the Twin Cities, Duluth, and their surrounding counties, the alien registration forms are arranged in alphabetical sequence by county name (rolls 1-167). Within each county the forms were first filed alphabetically by township, village, or city in folders that may contain forms for several such local units. For indexing, the forms in each folder were alphabetized by surname and given name(s) and then microfilmed in that sequence. Forms for Hennepin, Ramsey, and St. Louis counties and for the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth are arranged differently, as explained in the introduction to the microfilm set.[10]

Given the microfilmed index, it is easy to search for a known immigrant, although there may be spelling variations, filing inconsistencies, and errors in the indexing, especially since both the index cards and the original forms are hand-written. Although the registrant was required to sign the declaration, the form was completed by an agent who may have used a variant spelling of the alien's name (and misspelled foreign place names).

The country of allegiance is not included on the name index card; therefore, it is not possible to locate, for example, Swedes or to determine the number of Swedish aliens registered, without extracting them one by one from the 394 rolls of film. I have extracted the Swedes for one small county in southern Minnesota, Waseca County, which has had a very modest Swedish population clustered, for the most part, in one township. The alien declaration records for the county were originally arranged by township, village, or city of registration, with forms filed within each civil subdivision in serial number order. The forms are now microfilmed in a single alphabetical sequence by name for the entire county. Of 302 registrants, most were Germans, and the second largest grouping was Norwegian, reflecting the county's primary ethnic mix. Swedish aliens in the county totaled 30, and three American-born spouses of these aliens were also registered. Nineteen of the Swedish aliens resided in the core Swedish settlement area, Otisco Township, and one was found in the neighboring township of New Richland, into which the original "Vista" settlement of Swedes overlapped.[11] Five Swedish aliens were located in the city of Waseca, the county seat and railroad employment center, and the remaining five were scattered amongst the townships of Blooming Grove (2) and Freedom (1) and the village of Janesville (2). Nineteen of the immigrants were familiar to me through the records of the Swedish churches in Otisco Township and in Waseca, but the five in the scattered jurisdictions, as well as four in Otisco Township and two in Waseca were either not affiliated with the core Swedish community or not previously known at all.

Due to the length of the form, with its 35 items, it is not feasible to print in these pages the complete information even for the small number of 30 Swedish aliens and their three native-born spouses. But for a few examples, there follows below a truncated extraction of data from the first page (items 1 - 23) of the two-sided form. The second page, with the questions on property ownership, may also provide valuable information, including the registrant's signature or mark, but "no" and no entry are the most common responses for these items. The questions as listed below are also abbreviated from the original wording of the Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings form. After the examples, an extract of just the core birth and immigration data is provided for the remaining Swedish aliens registered in Waseca County.

The examples show that, while names may have been anglicized and Swedish place names may be mangled, the provision of birth date and birthplace makes it possible, in some instances at least, to track the immigrant back to a parish of origin in Sweden. The information on port and date of entry into the United States can be used to search passenger arrival lists and to seek a link to Swedish emigration records. In some cases male aliens had registered for the draft, which gives another record source for the individual. Question 22 about first papers will connect the registrants to naturalization records for those who had declared their intent to become citizens, and in several cases points to prior places of residence. Responses to the property ownership questions offer further avenues of pursuit. Finally, it would behoove the researcher to seek out the individual in the 1920 federal census for the civil subdivision in which alien registration took place and in prior federal and state censuses in accordance with the length of residence indicated in question 4.

The Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings form thus provides significant personal data on registered immigrants and may serve as the key to unlock other sources of information. As Carl Chrislock has stated, "...families subjected to alien registration would not—in the short run at least—cherish fond memories of the humiliation and insecurity engendered by the process. The perspective of later generations would be different. In the 1970s and 1980s, descendants of the 1918 registrants discovered that their ancestors' alien registration declarations were an invaluable source in the pursuit of family history."[12]

Complete Data on Nine Swedish Alien Registrants in Waseca County, Minnesota

Note that while items/questions 1 through 23 are specifically identified in the first example, only corresponding numbers are used in the subsequent examples.

		Example #1
•	**Jurisdiction & Serial Number:**	Blooming Grove, No. 9
1.	**Full name of Alien Registrant**	**Axel Conrad Swanson**
2.	**Street Address, POB or RFD**	Waseca RFD #3
3.	**Village, City or Town**	Blooming Grove (town)
4.	**Length of residence**	2 months
5.	**Age Last Birthday**	24 years
6.	**Country of Allegiance**	Sweden
7.	**Where Born**	Hjorted, Sweden
8.	**Date of Birth**	24 of Nov 1893
9.	**Port of Entry to U.S.**	New York

10. Date of Arrival in U.S.	13th of Oct 1913
11. Married?	Yes
12. Is Wife living?	Yes
13. Residence of wife, if living	with Husband
14. Do you speak and write English?	Speak not write English
15. Have a Trade or Profession?	Farm Laborer
16. Line of work at present	Farm Laborer
17. Names, ages of living children	None
18. Male relatives in present war?	None
19. Registered for draft? Where?	Minneapolis 8th Ward
20. Draft serial number	1149
21. Claim exemption from service?	No
22. Taken out first papers?	Cedar Co, State of Nebraska 27th day of Oct 1915
23. If so, why not second papers?	

	Example #2	*Example #3*
•	Blooming Grove, No. 10	Freedom, No. 4
1.	**Judith Paulina Swanson**	**Nels Ejnar Emanuel Anderson**
2.	Waseca RFD #3	RFD No. 2
3.	Blooming Grove (town)	Janesville
4.	2 months	2 1/2 months
5.	20 years	21 years
6.	Sweden	United States
7.	W. Tossos, Sweden	Norrkoping, Sweden
8.	20 of May 1897	February 27, 1897
9.	New York	New York, N. Y.
10.	7th Oct 1914	May 1913
11.	Yes	Single
12.	Husband, yes	—
13.	with Husband	—
14.	Speak, can't write English	Yes
15.	Housekeeping	No
16.	Housekeeping	Farm work
17.	No	—
18.		No
19.		No
20.		—
21.		—
22.		No
23.		—

	Example #4	*Example #5*
•	Janesville, No. 1	Janesville, No. 7
1.	**John Frisk**[13]	**Julia Wigren**
2.	Box PO 124	
3.	Janesville, Minn.	Janesville, Minn.
4.	11 years	1 1/2 yrs.
5.	68	19
6.	Sweden	Sweden
7.	Jempland, Sweden	Mangskog
8.	June 20 - 1849	Jan 9 - 1898
9.	New York	New York
10.	1873	Aug 28 - 1916
11.	Yes	No
12.	No	—
13.	—	—
14.	Do not write	Do not write it
15.	Yes - Blacksmith	No
16.	Blacksmithing and woodwork	Housework
17.	Edward Frisk 43; Arthur 30; Bud 27; Roy 21; Helen Frisk 41; Tickla Frisk 35; Alma Frisk 27; Ethel Frisk 20; none at school	None
18.	No	None
19.	No	No
20.		—
21.	Age limit	—
22.	Yes, about 1891 or 1892, Center City, Chisago Co., Minn.	
23.	1st were lost & could not get 2nd papers and did not get around to take them out again	—

	Example #6	*Example #7*
•	New Richland, No. 1	Otisco (village), No. 2
1.	**Ellen Johnson**[14]	**Ernest Fridulph Anderson**[15]
2.	R.F.D. # 5	R.R. 4
3.	New Richland (town)	New Richland
4.	8 years this coming fall	6 years
5.	33 years	24
6.	Sweden	Sweden
7.	Sweden	Blaking, Sweden

8.	Jul 12 - 1884	Nov 18, 1893
9.	Boston, Mass.	New York
10.	Sept. 1910	April 11 - 1912
11.	No	Yes
12.		Yes
13.		Same as self
14.	Speaks some but does not write English	Yes
15.	—	Farmer & carpenter
16.	Housework	Farming as laborer
17.	—	Bertil Wm. Anderson 12 months
18.	No	No
19.	—	Yes, at Otisco Minn.
20.	—	620
21.	—	Yes - Married
22.	No	Yes, Waseca, Minn. 1913
23.		Applied for 2nd papers Oct. 1917 - will get same in April 1918

	Example #8	*Example #9*
•	Otisco (village), No. 10	Otisco (town), No. 31
1.	**Allie Esther Anderson**[16]	**Matilda J. Anderson**[17]
2.	R.R. 4	R.F.D. #4
3.	New Richland	New Richland, Minn.
4.	22 years	35 years
5.	22 years	75 years
6.	U.S.A. - but married citizen of Sweden	Sweden
7.	Otisco Twnshp, Waseca Co. Minn.	Sweden
8.	Jan. 3 - 1896	Oct. 1st, 1842
9.		New York City, NY
10.		Dec. 1887
11.	Yes	Widow
12.	Husband, yes	—
13.	Husband: same as mine	—
14.	Yes	No
15.	Housekeeping	—
16.	Housekeeping	—
17.	Bertil Wm. Anderson 12 months	Carl Johan Gotfried, age 52 Helma Josephina Hultgren, 46 yrs
18.	No	None
19.	—	—

20. —	—
21. —	—
22.	No
23.	—

Abbreviated Data on Additional Swedish Alien Registrants in Waseca County, Minnesota

Note that the data are presented in the following order: Locality/ Number; Name; Birthplace; Birth Date; Port of Entry; and Entry Date

Otisco Township

•No. 3; **Erik Gunnar Erikson;**[18] (blank); 13 Feb. 1903; Boston; 22 Nov. 1907

•No. 4; **Ruth Katherine Ulrike Eriksson;**[19] Avesta, Sweden; 17 Apr. 1898; Boston; 22 Nov. 1907

•No. 7; **Anna Maria Eriksson;**[20] Uppland, Sweden; 18 Mar. 1874; Boston; 22 Nov. 1907

•No. 8; **Johanna Wetterbom;**[21] Visingö, Sweden; 15 May 1833; New York; 1871

•No. 9; **Johan Erik Eriksson;**[22] Ö. Löfsta, Uppland, Sweden; 26 Jan. 1873; Boston; 22 Nov. 1907

•No. 14; **Elias Eliason;**[23] Djuräs, Sweden; 31 Mar. 1881; New York; Feb. 1910

•No. 16; **K. August Korner;**[24] Malmo, Sweden; 6 Dec. 1879; New York; 26 Sept. 1894

•No. 21; **Elna Korner;**[25] Malmo, Sweden; 21 Nov. 1848; New York; 26 Sept. 1894

•No. 24; **Olaf Holmgren;**[26] Sweden; 29 Jan. 1867; New York; 24 June 1910

•No. 26; **Anna Lindahl;**[27] Otisco, Minn.; 29 Jan. 1874; —; —

•No. 27; **Oscar L. Lindahl;**[28] Linkajning, Sweden; 4 Mar, 1886; New York; 5 May 1908

•No. 28; **Mrs. Anna Louisa Johnson;**[29] Sweden; 7 Dec. 1840; New York; May 1868

•No. 29; **Mrs. Ellen Hedquist;**[30] Vorgorda, Sweden; 2 May 1834; Quebec; May 1887

•No. 30; **Alfred Hookenson;**[31] Kalskona, Sweden; 8 May 1878; New York; March 1907

Otisco Village

•No. 1; **Alfred C. Johnson;**[32] Jonkoping, Sweden; 2 Feb. 1859; Boston; 27 April 1879

•No. 6; **Anders Walfred Lindahl;**[33] Warnas County, Sweden; 30 Jan. 1881; New York; April 1911

•No. 15; **Anna Samson (Mrs.);**[34] Gonkoping, Sweden; 23 Dec. 1841; New York; July 1882

•No. 18; **Johnnie Gunnard Larson;**[35] Genkoping, Sweden; 16 Feb. 1895; New York; 1896

City of Waseca

•No. 16; **Elof Anderson;**[36] Sweden; 25 Sept. 1892; New York; 1912

•No. 17; **Thyra Marie Wilhelmina Eriksson;**[37] Gotland, Sweden; 26 May 1901; Boston; 22 Nov. 1907

•No. 22; **Mrs. Elof Anderson;**[38] Otisco, Waseca Co.; 16 Sept. 1897; —; —

•No. 32; **Carl Andrew Munsun;**[39] Sweden; 29 Sept. 1888; New York; 1910

•No. 46; **Andrew Hultgren;**[40] Sweden; 31 Aug. 1854; New York; 1880

•No. 60; **Johannes Edwin M. Franson;**[41] Sweden; 28 Mar. 1892; New York; 26 March 1916

Endnotes

[1] Nils William Olsson, "Declarations of Intention by Swedes in Rockford, 1859-1870," *Swedish American Genealogist* (hereafter *SAG*) 1 (March 1981): 7-14.

[2] Additional articles in *SAG*, by Nils William Olsson unless otherwise indicated, include: "Declarations and Naturalizations in New Sweden, Maine," *SAG* 1 (September 1981): 93-118;

"Naturalized Scandinavian Seamen in Boston 1815-1840," *SAG* I (September 1981): 125-133; "Naturalizations of Swedes in Rock Island County, IL 1855-1864," *SAG* 2 (March 1982): 18-27; William R. Peterson and Nils William Olsson, "Declarations of Intention by Swedes in Cadillac, MI 1875-1882," *SAG* 3 (March 1983): 19-27; "Naturalizations of Scandinavians in Los Angeles County 1856-1887," *SAG* 3 (September 1983): 104-107; "Naturalizations of Swedes in Lowell, MA 1842-1906," *SAG* 4 (June 1984): 49-62; "Declarations and Naturalizations of Swedes in Mobile, AL 1840-1906," *SAG* 6 (September 1986): 107-119; "Naturalizations of Scandinavians in New York 1802-1840," *SAG* 7 (June 1987): 75-83; "Naturalizations of Scandinavians in Penobscot Co., ME 1840-1900," *SAG* 9 (September 1989): 114-128; "Swedes in the Naturalization Index - A Sampling," *SAG* 10 (December 1990): 170-177; Arthur Virén, "Scandinavians in Douglas County, OR Who Declared Their Intent 1850-1906," *SAG* 12 (September 1992): 148-150, and "Scandinavians in Douglas County, OR Who Declared Their Intent 1906-1912," *SAG* 13 (March 1993): 56; Carol Ogren McGeehan, "Swedes Naturalized in Allegheny County, PA 1841-1891," *SAG* 13 (September 1993): 129-142; "Declarations of Intent and Naturalizations of Swedes in Ramsey County, MN 1850-1875," *SAG* 13 (December 1993): 193-200; "Declarations of Intent of Swedes in San Francisco 1851-1880," *SAG* 14 (September 1994): 113-122; James E. Erickson, "Jacob Fahlström's Declaration of Intention," *SAG* 15 (June 1995): 92-95; Patricia D. Whaley and Nils William Olsson, "Declarations of Intent by Swedes in Cleveland, Ohio 1842-1906," *SAG* 15 (September 1995): 113-132; "Early Swedes in Charleston, SC," *SAG* 17 (March 1997): 29-36; James E. Erickson, "Declarations of Intention by Four Pioneer Swedes," *SAG* 17 (June 1997): 92-96.

[3] Steven J. Keillor, *Hjalmar Peterson of Minnesota: The Politics of Provincial Independence* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1987), 43, cited in Carl H. Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991), 335.

[4] Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 327, 276-280.

[5] Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 277.

[6] By February 26, more than 2,000 aliens were alleged to have decamped to Canada or Wisconsin to avoid the registration. Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 278.

[7] *Report of Minnesota Commission of Public Safety* (St. Paul, [1919]), cited in Public Safety Commission. Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings Forms, 1918. Introduction, p. 2, State Archives Microfilm (hereafter SAM) 169, Minnesota Historical Society (hereafter MHS).

[8] Public Safety Commission. Alien Registration Forms Index, 1918. Introduction. SAM 169-I, MHS.

[9] Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. Alien Registration Forms Index, 1918 [microform] (Bloomington, MN: Integrated Imaging Systems, 1996), SAM 169-I, MHS; Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. Alien Registration and Declaration of Holdings Forms, 1918 [microform] (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1996), SAM 169, MHS. The index cards were discarded after microfilming and the original forms, on brittle, highly acidic paper, are closed to general use.

[10] Introduction, pp. 3-6, SAM 169. The introduction and roll contents list are filed at the beginning of roll 1, and a county-specific description is filmed at the beginning of each microfilm roll.

[11] Swedish immigrants with origins primarily in Vista *härad,* Jönköpings *län* relocated from Indiana to Otisco Township, Waseca County, in 1857. The rural settlement has centered around the Vista Lutheran Church, founded by Eric Norelius on 8 Aug. 1858, and the Vista Evangelical (Mission) Covenant Church, which originated in 1876-1877. See Ronald J. Johnson, *Vista '76: 120 Years of a Scandinavian-American Community* (New Richland, MN: Vista Community Anniversary Association, Inc., 1976).

[12] Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 280.

[13] John Frisk d. in Janesville, MN, 17 Feb. 1922. His birth date is recorded then as 17 June 1849 and his birthplace as "Hellsingland," Sweden. He lived at Rush City, MN, for 35 years before moving to Janesville. - Waseca County Deaths (hereafter *WD*), E:83,2; *Janesville Argus*, 22 Feb. 1922.

[14] Elin Viktoria [Jonasdotter] was b. at Stenkilstorp Södregård, Adelöv Parish (Jön.), 12 July 1884. Elin W. Johnson emigr. from Gränna (Jön.), departing Göteborg 9 Sept. 1910. Her destination was New Richland. She lived for 37 years in New Richland Twp., Waseca Co., MN; m. 11 July 1942

Oscar Verplank; and d. in New Richland 13 May 1948. - Adelöv Births; Databasen Emigranten (hereafter *DE*) (Göteborg: Göteborgs-Emigranten, [1996; CD-ROM]); WD, 2:48; *New Richland Star*, 20 May 1948.

[15] Ernst Fridolf Andersson was b. in Gammalstorp Parish (Blek.). He emigr. from Gammalstorp via Malmö 29 March 1912 to Kiester, MN, and arr. New York 11 April 1912 on the *"Olympia"* [NB: the White Star liner *Olympic* arr. New York 10 April 1912]. Ernest F. Anderson m. 15 May 1916 Allie Esther Walstrom in Otisco Twp. He took out first papers 2 Dec. 1913 at Waseca, MN, and was naturalized on 17 March 1919. The declaration of holdings lists 40 acres in section 14, township 54, Itasca Co., MN, valued at $500. The Anderson family moved to Warba in Itasca County after 1921. - Vista Evangelical (Mission) Covenant Church records (hereafter *VM); DE;* Waseca County District Court, Record of Declaration of Intention (hereafter *DI)* and Naturalization Records; Alien Registration form (hereafter *AR).*

[16] Allie Esther Walstrom m. the prior registrant, Ernest F. Anderson. She was b. to Swedish immigrant Johan August Wahlström (John Walstrom) and his American-born wife, Maria (Mary) Adolphina Peterson. - *VM.*

[17] Mathilda Josefina Andersdotter was b. in Horn Parish (Ög.) 1 Oct. 1842 and d. in Otisco Twp. 27 Aug. 1926. She and her dau., Hilma Josefina Andersdotter, b. Södra Vi Parish (Kalm.) 19 Oct. 1871, exited from Fattighuset, Södra Vi, to North America 24 Oct. 1887. A son, Karl Johan Gustaf (or: Gotfried) Andersson, b. 1865/67, and dau., Selma, b. 1875 also came to Otisco Twp. - *VM; WD,* E:104,2; Södra Vi Exits.

[18] Son of Johan Erik Eriksson (below) and Elida U. Lundgren; m. Margretta Curl and d. in Boston, MA, June 1964. - *VL;* Letter from Harald Eriksson, 19 Nov. 1975.

[19] Dau. of Johan Erik Eriksson (below) and Elida U. Lundgren; m. Archie C. Johnson (d. in St. Paul, MN, 7 March 1923) at Vista Lutheran Church 30 June 1921; m. (2) William C. Manthey in St. Paul, MN, 23 Oct. 1940, and lived at Hyannis, MA. - *VL; Vista 1856-1956* ([New Richland, MN: Vista Centennial Publicity and Historical Committee, 1956]), 23.

[20] Anna Maria Wallin, 2nd wife of Johan Erik Eriksson (below); d. in Sweden 2 May 1955. - *VL; Vista 1856-1956*, 47.

[21] Johanna Svensdotter, b. at Backstugan Ede, Säby Sadelmakaregård, Visingsö Parish (Jön.) 29 May 1833; m. Johannes Petersson (b. at Skinnarp, Gränna Parish, Jön. 28 Jan. 1823; d. in Waseca Co., MN, 23 Oct. 1903) in Gränna, 8 June 1856. Johannes emigr. about 1870. Johanna and children (all b. in Gränna)—Carl Johan, b. 1 July 1859; August, b. 25 May 1861; Otto, b. 4 Dec. 1863; Anders Peter, b. 22 Feb. 1866; and Alfred, b. 21 March 1868—emigr. from Spånarp, Gränna 1 May 1871. Only Carl Johan (d. 2 Feb. 1948) and August (d. Otisco Twp. 21 March 1880) survived the trip to America. The family adopted the surname Wetterbom. Three children (Ida Mathilda, b. 26 Dec. 1873, d. 7 Jan. 1874; Otto, b. 12 May 1875, d. Waseca, MN, 18 Aug. 1958; and Albertina, b. 19 Sept. 1876, d. Waseca, MN, 12 Jan. 1964) were b. in Otisco Twp. Johanna Wetterbom d. in Otisco Twp. 14 Feb. 1923. - Visingsö and Gränna parish records; *VL; WD,* A:27,32; E:88,10.

[22] Pastor of Vista Lutheran Church, 1915-1922, b. Österlövsta Parish (Upps.); arr. Boston with family on *Saxonia*, Cunard Line, 22 Nov. 1907; ordained in Chicago, IL 16 June 1912; took out first papers in Waseca Co., 12 April 1918, and was naturalized 21 March 1921. He trans. to Church of Sweden 1922, exiting with wife, Anna Maria, (above) and their American-born children, John Harald, b. 28 Nov. 1908, and Ebba Viola, b. 23 Jan. 1912, to Västerås, Sweden; d. in Sweden 4 Oct. 1940. - *VL;* Conrad Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium* (Rock Island, IL: Augustana Historical Society, 1980), 87; Waseca County District Court, *DI* and Naturalization Records.

[23] Farm laborer living in Otisco Twp. for 2 years. The form also lists a wife living in Djurås [Djurås?], Sweden, and 2 children, Andrew Walfrid and Eric Manfrid, going to school in Sweden. - *AR.*

[24] Resident 13 years, unmarried, farmer. Took out first papers at Waseca, MN, 20 Nov. 1917, giving arrival date in New York from Helsingborg as 23 Sept. 1894 on the *Slavominica* [Hamburg-American Line ship *Slavonia* arr. 22 Sept. 1894 from Scandinavian ports]. Came to Otisco Twp. between 1895 and 1900, moved to Minneapolis Nov. 1919. Likely identical with Karl August

Körner, b. in Caroli Parish, Malmö (Malm.) in 1879 to the soldier Karl Körner and w. Elna Nilsdotter (see next entry). - *AR; DI; VL; New Richland Star,* 31 Oct. 1919; Caroli Parish, Malmö, Birth Index.

[25] Widow; does not speak and write English. K. August Korner (above) and Augusta Korner are listed as living children. Moved to Minneapolis Nov. 1919. Believed to be Elna Nilsdotter, who m. the soldier Karl Körner in 1874, and had dau. Augusta Maria, b. 1874, and s. Karl August, b. 1879, in Caroli Parish, Malmö. *Fröken* Augusta Maria Körner, b. Caroli Parish 27 Nov. 1874, was received at the Vista Lutheran Church 18 Dec. 1898; she d. in Minneapolis 22 March 1928. - *AR; New Richland Star*, 14 Nov. 1919; Caroli Parish records; *VL.*

[26] Farm worker, (previously) resident in Minneapolis about 3 years; widower with children in Sweden. - *AR.*

[27] Anna Peterson, b. in Otisco Twp. 29 Jan. 1874; m. 27 May 1914 Oscar Lindahl (below); d. in Otisco Twp. 12 Feb. 1941. - *VL; VM; WD,* F:9,C.

[28] Resident 4 years; trade: butcher; present work: farming; married (Anna Peterson Lindahl, above); took out first papers at St. Anthony, ID, 1913. Oscar Leonard Johansson was b. at Stafsäter, Vist Parish (Ög.) 4 March 1886. He emigr. from Linköping 20 April 1908 and arr. New York on the Scandinavian American Line's *Hellig Olav*, 5 [1] May 1908. He lived at Rigby, ID, when he took out first papers in Fremont Co., ID, 5 June 1911. He was naturalized as Oscar Leonard Lindahl in Waseca Co., 26 June 1918. He d. in Waseca, MN, 30 Oct. 1956. - *AR;* Vist Birth and Household Examination Rolls; Waseca County District Court Naturalization Records; *WD*, 6:137.

[29] Widow; does not speak or write English. The form also names 5 living children. Anna Lovisa Persdotter was b. in Västra Eneby Parish (Ög.) 7 Dec. 1838 and d. in Otisco Twp. 14 May 1921. She m. the tailor Carl Fredrik Jonsson from Kisa Parish (Ög.) at Västra Eneby 25 April 1868 and emigr. 2 May 1868 from Gulltorp, Västra Eneby. He was b. at Torp Sandviken, Ramshult, Kisa 3 Sept. 1824 and exited from Brostorp, Hargs *ägor*, Kisa for North America 2 May 1868. The couple settled in Otisco Twp. in 1868. C. F. Johnson d. in Otisco Twp. 24 April 1897. - *AR;* Västra Eneby Marriages and Exits; Kisa Births, Household Examination Rolls, and Exits; *VL; VM; WD,* E:78,15; A:153,3.

[30] Widow, does not speak or write English. The form also names 7 living children (below) [of 12]. Elin Jonsdotter was b. in St. Mellby Parish (Älvs.) 3 May 1835, and d. in Otisco Twp. 25 July 1918. Emigr. from Lekåsa Parish (Skar.), departing Göteborg 29 April 1887 for Waseca, MN, with h. Andreas Jansson (b. in Tumberg Parish, Älvs. 16 Dec. 1830; d. in Otisco Twp. 3 Nov. 1907) and children b. in Kyrkås Parish (Skar.): Alfred, 21 March 1870; Maria, 20 Nov. 1871; August, 24 Dec. 1873; Anna Mathilda, 16 May 1876; Frits, 17 Feb. 1878; Fredrik, 17 July 1880. An elder s., Hermann, b. in Kyrkås 11 Jan. 1866, also emigr. in 1887 and came to Otisco Twp. from Chicago in 1889. Hedquist became the family name in America. - *AR; VL; WD,* E:63,3*; DE;* Kyrkås Births.

[31] Unmarried machinist, engaged in farming, resident one month in Otisco Twp. - *AR.*

[32] Resident for 24 years; widower; farmer and carpenter; took out first papers at La Fayette, IN, in 1881. The form also lists 7 children. Alfred Johansson was b. at Krakarp Frälsegård, Skärstad Parish (Jön.) 1 Feb. 1859, and emigr. from Hökhult, Hakarp Parish (Jön.), 6 May 1879 (cf. arrival date). His declaration of intention, filed 13 March 1918 in Waseca Co., gives arrival in Boston as 3 May 1879. He d. at Breckinridge, MN, in Jan. 1930 and is buried at the Vista Covenant Cemetery, Otisco Twp., Waseca Co., MN. He m. 31 March 1886 Anna Christina Palm, who was b. in Sweden, 26 or 27 Jan. 1863, emigr. 1880, and d. in Otisco Twp. 17 Jan. 1916. Two of Alfred's sisters also came to Otisco Twp.: Anna Brita Johansdotter (Mrs. John Anderson), b. at Krakarp Frälsegård, Skärstad 21 March 1849, emigr. from Hökhult, Hakarp, Sept. 1880, and d. at Waseca, MN, 8 Oct. 1923; and Augusta Johansdotter (Mrs. Emil F. Carlson), b. at Krakarp Frälsegård, Skärstad 20 Jan. 1862, exited from Bosgårds Södergård, Skärstad, to North America 9 April 1887, departed Göteborg 15 April 1887 for Waseca, MN, and d. in Waseca 12 Dec. 1937. - *AR;* Skärstad and Hakarp parish records; *DI; VM; DE; WD,* E:53,27; E:90,22; E:67,24.

[33] Resident 2 years; "speak some but cannot write" English; hired hand on farm; first papers at St. Anthony, ID, Nov. 1911. Bro. of Oscar Leonard Lindahl (above). Anders Walfred Johansson was b.

at Värdsnäs [Vårdnäs, Ög.?] 30 Jan. 1881. - *AR;* Vist Parish (Ög.) Household Examination Roll.

[34] Resident 30 years; married (but no data on spouse); engaged in farming. Charley Samson, "40 some years," and Tilda Samson, 41 years, are listed as living children. Anna Maja Månsdotter was b. at Raestorp, Gränna Parish (Jön.) 22 Jan. 1841 and m. the miller Samuel August Samuelsson in Vireda Parish (Jön.) 31 Dec. 1864. They moved to Husqvarna Qvarn, Hakarp Parish (Jön.) in 1866 and to Jönköping in 1868. The former miller was sentenced on 19 Feb. 1870 to 2 years imprisonment for postal robbery. Anna Maja and her s., Carl August Samuelsson, b. in Hakarp 2 Oct. 1867, and dau., Tilda Kristina Samuelsdotter, b. in Haurida Parish (Jön.) 15 March 1870, emigr. from Haurida, leaving Göteborg for New York 16 June 1882. They came to Otisco Twp., joining Anna Maja's bro., Carl Peter Månsson (Charley Lindberg), b. at Bohult, Haurida 29 Sept. 1843, who had emigr. from Eksjö (Jön.) via Göteborg to Chicago 21 May 1875 and arr. in Otisco Twp. in 1875. Charley Lindberg d. in Otisco Twp. 20 Dec. 1933. Anna Maja (Sampson) d. in Otisco Twp. 2 Sept. 1929. Carl August (Charles Sampson), d. at Owatonna, MN, 14 Dec. 1935. Tilda Kristina moved to Minneapolis and m. a Mr. Skarnes(s). - *AR;* Gränna, Vireda, Hakarp, Haurida, Jönköpings Sofia, and Eksjö parish records; *DE; VL; VM; WD,* E:141,23; E:121,18; *Waseca Journal*, 18 Dec. 1935.

[35] Resident 22 years; unmarried; farm laborer. Registered for draft at Otisco, MN, serial no. 647. No first or second papers, as "did not think he needed same as he was only one year old when he came to this country." Took out first papers in Waseca 15 March 1920, giving birthplace as "Edhalla Gord, Sweden" and arrival at "Boston, state of New York" on White Star Line as 24 Oct. 1895. Johnnie Gunnard was the adopted s. of C. O. Larson (Carl Oscar Larsson), b. at Söderhult, Fröåsa, Kisa (Ög.) 20 Jan. 1860, and Emma Sofia Elisabeth Peterson, b. in Otisco Twp. 1 Oct. 1865. He d. unmarried in Waseca, MN, 24 Oct. 1969.- *AR; DI;* Kisa Births; *VL; WD*, 12:315.

[36] Resident 2 months; married; speaks English; trade: R. R. work, work in shops; present work: washing boilers. One child listed: Doris, 11 weeks old. Registered for draft in Otisco Twp., serial no. 652. Took out first papers at Waseca, 1912. Carl Elaf Bernhard Anderson, b. 25 Sept. 1893 (cf. *AR*), was a farm laborer in Otisco Twp. at the time of his declaration of intention, 22 Aug. 1912. He arr. New York 30 March 1912 on the *Mauritania*, having emigr. from Asberg, Denmark. His last foreign residence was Hjertlanda, Sweden. He is presumably the same as E. B. Andersson, aged 19, *hemmason* from Hjärtlanda Parish (Jön.), who emigr. from Malmö, 19 March 1912, to Waseca, MN. Elof Anderson m. 8 Aug. 1917 Elsie Lydia Swenson (below). A resident of Waseca, he d. in a truck accident in St. Mary's Twp., Waseca Co., 30 May 1955. - *AR; DI; DE; WD*, 5:274; *Waseca Journal*, 31 May 1955.

[37] Dau. of Johan Erik Eriksson (above) and Elida U. Lundgren, d. unmarried in St. Paul, MN, ca. 15 Dec. 1926. - *VL*; *Waseca Journal,* 26 Dec. 1926.

[38] Wife of Carl Elaf Bernhard Anderson (above), d. in Waseca, MN, 25 Aug. 1962. - *WD*, 9:132.

[39] Resident 6 months; married; speaks English; butter maker. Two children listed: Madline, 3 years; Rosolla, 17 months. Registered for draft 5 June 1917, serial no. 1239. Took out first papers at Waseca, MN, 22 Nov. 1913. His declaration of intention gives name as Carl Anderson Munson, born at Marsvinsholm, Sweden 29 Sept. 1889 (cf. *AR*). Emigr. from Liverpool; arr. New York 16 Dec. 1910 on *Arabic* [White Star Line's *Arabic* arr. New York 12 Dec. 1910]. He m. Laura Cecilie Tollefson and d. in 1966. - *AR; DI;* Johnson, *Vista '76*, 198.

[40] Resident 20 years; single; stonemason. Took out first papers in Waseca, MN, 18 Jan. 1919, giving name as Andrew John Hultgren, b. Exro, Sweden 21 Aug. 1854. Last foreign residence was Svinhult, Sweden. Emigr. from "Jeteborg," arriving in New York 3 May 1880 - *AR; DI.*

[41] Resident 2 years; unmarried; packer in flour mill. Registered for draft at Waseca, MN, serial no. 1258. Took out first papers at Waseca, [1 April] 1916. Birthplace in declaration of intention is Ekeby, Sweden. Emigr. from Aranas (?), Sweden via Copenhagen, arriving in New York 23 March (cf. *AR*) 1916 on the *United States* (Scandinavian-American Line). Ed Franson was a barber in Waseca. He m. 31 Aug 1930 Mabel Anderson Bartz and d. in Waseca 13 Dec. 1976. - *AR; DI; WD*, 16:170.

The Atlantic Bridge

by Ted Rosvall*

Every Swedish emigration or family researcher has come across the laconic remark in the "exit" column of a household examination roll *(husförhörslängd)*—"Moved to North America." Wherever would one continue a search from such a broad starting point? North America is a continent comprised of two countries, some sixty states or territories, hundreds of millions of people, and few usable indices. Without more specific clues, the search for missing relatives in the U.S. or Canada can be, at best, very challenging. Furthermore, once a researcher begins working with North American material, problems may arise because the information contained in census records, naturalization records, church records, city directories, obituaries, etc., is either sparse or conflicting. "Born in Sweden" may be as close as it ever gets!

Because of the size of the country and the rather limited number of inhabitants, and also because there are more finding aids available, the search on the Swedish side may be easier. But there is still a great need for the ultimate finding aid—the "Atlantic Bridge," if you wish—between the records in Sweden and those on the North American continent. What basic (minimum) information would have to be included with each entry in such a finding aid?

The genealogical society in Falköping (Falbygdens Släktforskarförening) has, for years, been working on a project designed to find and identify close to 4000 individuals who emigrated from the fifty or so parishes in and around the town of Falköping in Västergötland. A typical entry from the Falköping database speaks to the question posed above. It also illustrates the Falköping "method" of setting up a database, which could serve as a prototype for a full-scale "Atlantic Bridge." Consider the following:

Inga Lisa Johansdotter [Palmqvist]
**1834 7/2 Rumpegården, Jättened, Gudhem (R)*
+1875 8/2 Rockford, Winnebago Co, IL

Here we have the first names *Inga Lisa,* the Swedish surname *Johansdotter* (maiden name if a married woman), and the American surname *Palmqvist*

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(which may be an Americanization of the Swedish name, a totally new adopted name or, as in this case, the married name of a woman). Furthermore we have the exact date and place of birth in Sweden, down to croft/farm, village *(rote),* parish and county *(län).* We also have the exact date and place of death in the U.S., down to town, county and state. If anything else needs to be added, it might be the year of emigration. Otherwise, such an entry is sufficient for the Swedish researcher to find his missing relatives in the U.S., starting perhaps with an obituary, cemetery records or church records in Rockford, IL. The entry data are also sufficient for the American researcher looking for ancestors and relatives in Sweden. The exact date and place of birth given open a direct highway to the Swedish church records, parish offices, and archives.

Imagine a huge database, accessible via CD-ROM or even the Internet, with some 1.3 million entries, similar to the one above, covering the entire period of Swedish emigration in the 19th and 20th centuries. What a magnificent research tool! What fun it would be to bring it all together! Is it an unrealistic dream? It really isn't. The experience, from the work in Falköping, is very promising and serves as an example for any town, county or part of Sweden. A lot has already been done in various parts of the country. What is sorely needed is someone (or some institution) to gather up all the loose ends and tie them together into a full-scale project—"the Atlantic Bridge" between Sweden and North America.

A lot of effort has been put into finding and documenting in the Swedish records all individuals who emigrated from Sweden. The new CD-EMIGRANTEN is the result of years of work on passenger lists and other sources concerning departing emigrants. A careful scanning of Swedish church records, mainly household examination rolls and migration books, has been made in many parts of Sweden and the results are being fed into the EMIBAS project. Another current project (EMISJÖ) aims at a master index for Swedish seamen, many of whom eventually jumped ship in various North American ports. The Swedish side of Swedish emigration research seems to be well taken care of or, at least, moving along nicely. This is less so in the U.S. and in Canada. What sources are there and how can they be used in the advanced genealogical "matchmaking" that "the Atlantic Bridge" requires? Falbygdens Släktforskarförening suggests that the following ingredients be part of the overall recipe.

1. Swedish American Church Records (Svenskamerikanska kyrkoarkiv) (SAKA)

The Swedes brought with them a tradition of excellent record keeping when they started to form new congregations and churches in the new country. Not only did they record the ministerial acts of baptisms, weddings, and funerals, but

they also kept membership rolls that are very similar to the Swedish household examination rolls. Above all, these rolls generally include the one vital piece of information—where in Sweden the members/immigrants were born. This may be the only source in the U.S. that provides this crucial detail. One of the most efficient and diligent Swedish emigration researchers, Bertil Grundström from Tranås, has been scrutinizing Swedish American church records for many years and has produced a database that contains vital information on over half-a-million individuals. Others, including Kurt Andersson from Skara, and Anna-Lena Hultman from Hössna, have specialized in certain areas, using the SAKA rolls as their starting point. Although a gold mine of information, these records must be matched with Swedish church records, especially birth records, since the mistakes in the Swedish American church records are numerous.

For example, the date of birth and even the year of birth are more often wrong than correct. This may have to do with the fact that the two countries have different methods of describing dates. For example, a Swede would immediately interpret the notation 10.8 or 10/8 as August 10, whereas an American would probably guess at October 8. The surnames have almost always been tampered with in the U.S. material. The double "s" in "Andersson" and similar patronymics has generally been reduced to one, the "Johanssons" have mostly been turned into "Johnsons," and names involving the three extra Swedish letters (å, ä and ö) have been transformed in myriad ways. The parish listed as "place of birth" is, in many cases, instead the "parish of departure," that is to say, the place the emigrant lived before he or she emigrated.

In spite of these obstacles, the Swedish American church records, available at The House of Emigrants *(Utvandrarnas Hus)* in Växjö, Sweden, and the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center at Augustana College in Rock Island, IL, remain the number one source for finding Swedish emigrants. Matching the information found in the SAKA rolls with the CD EMIGRANTEN or the EMIBAS and EMISJÖ databases should, in most cases, permit a definite identification of the emigrant.

2. Swedish American Newspapers

Swedish American newspapers, published in places like New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, and California are another rich and valuable source for the emigration researcher. They have been rather neglected, however, since the desired information (mainly obituaries) is almost impossible to find, if the exact date and place of death of an individual one is trying to find are not known. Several projects are currently underway to extract information from all obituaries in *Svenska Amerikanaren-Tribunen, Sändebudet,* and other similar newspapers and compile it in a new, searchable database.

Since the obituaries generally give birthplaces, or at least an indication as to where in Sweden the deceased came from, this new material will be a wonderful help, especially when the individuals cannot be located in the Swedish American church records. We must not forget that not everyone joined a Swedish congregation: some chose to join Norwegian, German, or even American congregations. Some formed "free" churches of various denominations, and some emigrants chose never to join a church at all. Here too, matching the newspaper database with the Swedish databases should make it possible to confirm that the "Mrs. Palmqvist who died in 1875 in Rockford, IL is indeed the same person who was born in 1834 at Rumpegården in Gudhem Parish."

It is equally important to scan the local *Swedish* newspapers for items concerning emigrants. Many times the family in Sweden would publish a death advertisement in the local newspaper as soon as they got word that one of their children or siblings had passed away in the U.S. These ads, sometimes accompanied by a small obituary or news item, often provide information as to where the emigrant died—a piece of information that can often guide the researcher to others of the same family or from the same parish who were also residing at that particular place. From time to time, the local Swedish newspapers would also publish letters from emigrants, giving many interesting details about their lives and circumstances in the new country.

3. Estate Inventories *(Bouppteckningar)*

This is an emigration source that has been strangely neglected. The fact is that some of the best clues as to the whereabouts of emigrated relatives may be found in the estate inventories produced following the deaths of those that stayed behind. How so? Well, estate inventories list all the heirs of a deceased person, including those that may have emigrated to the U.S. Whereas earlier estate inventories may only describe emigrant heirs as "the son August in North America" or "the daughter Emma at an unknown place in America," later ones often give more complete information, such as "the son Otto in Chicago" or "the daughter Anna married to John Lindstrom in Moline." From the 1920s or 1930s, one can even hope for a complete address and, perhaps, also a letter of attorney from the heir himself. To look for estate inventories following the deaths of the emigrant's parents is, of course, a must; but one must also remember that the emigrant may be listed as heir after a deceased and childless sister or brother, uncle or aunt, or even a mother-in-law or father-in-law. First cousins are, however, not considered heirs according to Swedish legislation.

For a project covering a whole town, county, or other jurisdictional district, it would make good sense to go through all estate inventories from 1850 to the present, copying the list of heirs for every such document that includes an

emigrant. Chances are that many pleasant surprises will be found. This is due to the fact that many single emigrants often married people from the same area in Sweden and, thus, it is often possible to find otherwise missing emigrants thanks to the estate inventories for members of their spouse's family in Sweden.

4. The "Pamphlet"

Many Americans travel to Sweden every year in search of their roots. They may not know much about their family background in Sweden, but they often know the name of the church or the closest town from which their emigrant ancestor came. Hence, they usually try to find the town, church, farm or house where the family once lived. Here is where the "pamphlet" produced by the local historical or genealogical society comes in handy. Such a document, with a catchy title (e.g., "Searching for your roots? We can help you!"), a map of the area with all churches and parishes listed, and a description of the local emigration project, will doubtless produce a lot of phone calls, letters, and e-mails.

Contact is the operative word, and the contact established may prove beneficial to both parties. The emigration group can lead the visiting American to the right sources and, perhaps, contact local people who will be happy to show the visitors around, guide them to old houses, ruins, cemeteries, etc. The group will, in turn, receive information as to what happened to yet another (or five, or ten) missing emigrants. The "pamphlet" should be placed in all churches, hotels, libraries, tourist bureaus, and other suitable places. It could also be placed in various archives, libraries, and societies in the U.S.

The Internet is also a forum that should not be neglected in this context. An "Emigration Project" home page, listing all the parishes and churches in the area, may be a way of increasing the chances of being found by those on the other side of the Atlantic.

5. Death Certificates

Many states, including Illinois and Massachusetts, have made their early death certificates available to researchers. Extracting and compiling information, from every death certificate that lists the deceased person's place of birth as "Sweden," would result in a tremendous database for further research. Based on name, age/birth date, names of parents, number of years in the U.S., and other information available on the certificate, it ought to be possible to combine this information with information from the Swedish databases mentioned above, thus establishing a lot of perfect matches. This would, of course, be a tremendous undertaking; but done as a "joint venture" by an "immigration research group"

in the U.S. and an "emigration research group" in Sweden, it might be a worthwhile and inspiring project.

6. Inheritance Cases in the Archives of the Swedish Foreign Ministry

The Swedish Foreign Ministry (UD) was often contacted in connection with inheritance cases concerning deceased emigrants. It was their task, when possible, to locate heirs and relatives. Whereas a recent series of articles in *Swedish American Genealogist*[1] dealt with the early files (up to 1901) of this exciting material, the cases actually continue up until the 1950s. The Riksarkivet in Stockholm has a usable card index for these cases.

On a local level, the Court House (Tingsrätten) often had to deal with applications from families in Sweden who needed to have a sister or a brother declared legally dead, so that they could go on with legal matters, ownership of farms, etc. These files can also hold important clues, even if it was not possible at the time of filing to find out what had happened to the individual in question. With modern databases and newly released resources (e.g., the 1920 U.S. Census), the clues contained in these files may now be sufficient to find the whereabouts of individuals who were then missing.

7. Late Passenger Arrivals

Beginning with the year 1898, the documentation of passenger arrivals in New York and other ports suddenly improved drastically. There is not only a usable index for this material but also a wealth of information in the manifestos, including such crucial details as who the immigrant left behind in Sweden (e.g., a father, a wife, an employer), their destination, and to whom they were travelling, including an address and the relationship, if any, to that person. Granted, the major part of the Swedish emigration period took place before 1898, but there were always latecomers. Following the footsteps of a nephew, niece or first cousin who came later, may lead to important information about family members who were earlier emigrants. Therefore, when trying to find a missing early emigrant, it is advisable to do a bit of roundabout research in Sweden on every family member or even neighbor who emigrated after 1898. If they did, the natural next step would be to scan the New York arrival manifestos for details.

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[1] Nils William Olsson and Ted Rosvall, parts 1-4 plus addendum, "Inheritance Cases in the Archives of the Swedish Foreign Ministry of Swedes who Died in America," *Swedish American Genealogist* 17 (December 1997): 185-200; 18 (March 1998): 41-53; 18 (June 1998): 84-103; 18 (September 1998): 161-178; 18 (December 1998): 224.

8. County Histories/Heritage Books

The printed materials should not be overlooked when trying to find missing emigrants. Many county histories and heritage books hold hundreds of biographical sketches, sometimes depicting a whole family or "clan." The information in these books cannot always be trusted, based as it is on information voluntarily provided by family members themselves, but will often give information otherwise extremely hard to come by.

Such sources generally lack good geographical and surname indexes to help researchers find their missing relatives. In addition, they often either list the birth places of immigrants as simply "Sweden" or "Stockholm" or they misspell parish names so badly as to make them unintelligible. A chronological master index, based on birth dates, might prove to be a better tool for the researcher. The Swedish Emigrant Institute in Växjö has the embryo of such a card index, with information excerpted from the library holdings of the institute.

Conclusion

Dr. Nils William Olsson and the late Erik Wikén laid the foundation for this type of emigrant identification research through their monumental work *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850*. This gold mine of information lists over 5000 early emigrants.

Although the major part of the Swedish emigration history took place after 1850 and included approximately 1.3 million emigrants, constructing an "Atlantic Bridge" as presented above should not be an impossible task, provided there are enough individuals willing to participate in the project.

Nils F:son Brown and the Decline of the Swedish-American Press, 1910-1940

Ulf Jonas Björk*

After its peak in the 1910s, the Swedish-language press in America began to decline rapidly. Between 1910 and 1940, the number of newspapers fell by 60 percent, from 51 to 20. Historians have thoroughly explored the reasons for the decline—the anti-immigrant sentiment produced by World War I, the Great Depression, and, above all, the end of unrestricted immigration to the United States—but little attention has so far been given to the response of the journalists who produced the newspapers.[1] This article attempts to provide such a perspective by focusing on the career of Nils F:son Brown (1886-1960), a journalist who entered the press at the height of its powers and left it in its twilight years.

In the course of a career that began in 1910 and ended in 1940, Brown gained extensive knowledge of Swedish-language journalism, working for seven newspapers in three states and one Canadian province. He saw, firsthand, the effects of World War I, the Depression, and the end of mass immigration. In the columns of his papers, Brown wrote often about the Swedish-American press, and after he left full-time work as a journalist, the veteran editor looked back on his career in an uncompromising autobiography. This insider's view thus reveals a great deal about how the Swedish-American press declined and how its editors reacted.

Nils F. Brown arrived in Minneapolis in the spring of 1910, and was fortunate enough to secure a position at the city's largest Swedish-language newspaper, *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*, after waiting only a few weeks. He had chosen an auspicious moment to enter the Swedish-American press. According to the U.S. census taken that year, the number of Swedish-born immigrants stood at 660,000, more than ever before. These Swedish-Americans

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[1] *Ayer's Newspaper Directory*, 1910-50; Sture Lindmark, *Swedish America, 1914-1932* (Uppsala: Läromedelsförlagen, 1971), 227-28; Ulf Beijbom, "The Swedish Press," in Sally M. Miller, ed., *The Ethnic Press in the United States* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 385.

represented a huge potential readership for the Swedish-language newspapers, and it is no coincidence that the circulation these papers laid claim to was at a record level in 1910, totaling 500,000.[2]

Among the fifty-some weekly newspapers published in Swedish in America, Brown had chosen to come aboard one of the flagships. *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* claimed to reach 50,000 readers every week, and even if that figure may have been exaggerated, it is more than likely that *Posten* was one of the three largest papers, surpassed only by one or two of the Chicago weeklies. The Minneapolis paper was published by Swan J. Turnblad, a man whose keen sense of what appealed to readers had made *Posten* a financial success and its owner one of the few Swedish-American newspaper publishers to amass a fortune.[3]

The young immigrant hired by Turnblad was a new breed of Swedish-American journalist. Author and veteran journalist Ernst Skarstedt found himself forced to compete for newspaper positions with these newcomers a few years after Brown's arrival, and he disapprovingly characterized them as "a deluge of newly arrived students."[4] The description certainly fit Brown, who had become a *student* in the then-Swedish sense of the word after graduating from *läroverk* (secondary school) in Uppsala in 1906, and the title summed up his life prior to coming to Minneapolis. The fall after he graduated from the *läroverk*, Nils Olof Fredrik Åhlén (the name Nils F:son Brown being an invention for life in America) had enrolled at Uppsala University with the intent of studying law, but after two semesters he interrupted his studies and went across the country to Göteborg to take courses at a business institute. After a year at the institute he was back at Uppsala for fall semester 1908, but again he lasted only two semesters before leaving again, this time to be conscripted into the army.[5]

Brown may have been lucky in securing a position on a Swedish-American newspaper, but such work did not necessarily result in personal prosperity and

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[2] Nils F:son Brown autobiography, typewritten manuscript, Brown papers, University of Washington, 5; Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910. Vol. II: Population* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913); *Ayer's*, 1910-50.

[3] A. E. Strand, A History of the Swedish-Americans of Minnesota, Vol. I (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), 302-04; Lawrence Hammerstrom, "The Swedish American Publishing Company Stockholders' Lawsuit Against Swan J. Turnblad," Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly (hereafter, SPHQ) 35 (1, 1984), 39-42; Ayer's, 1910.

[4] Skarstedt to Conrad Skarstedt, 13 January 1915, Conrad Skarstedt papers, Riksföreningen Sverigekontakt, Göteborg, Sweden.

[5] *Uppsala Universitets Katalog*, 1906-09; *Göteborgs Handelsinstituts Katalog*, 1907-08; "Tankar och reflexioner," *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* (hereafter, *SAP*), 9 October 1912, 9; *Svensk-amerikanska pressen och Svenska Journalistförbundet i Amerika* (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1923), 18.

prestige, as the new junior editor at *Posten* would find out. Looking back, Brown claimed that he soon felt "profound contempt" for *Posten* and its publisher. Some of the resentment undoubtedly stemmed from the fact that Turnblad, who was not a journalist himself and did not write for his paper, treated his staff as salaried employees rather than intellectual professionals. According to Brown, the publisher frequently dismissed the viewpoints of his editors with the remark that journalists were easy to replace, and the threat of dismissal also enabled the publisher to require long hours at low pay. The *Posten* staff worked every day of the week for a weekly total of 63 hours, and their salaries started at $12 and ended, at least in Brown's case, at $15.[6]

Still, for a young man starting out in Swedish-American journalism, *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* was an excellent training ground, for on its staff were two of Swedish-America's best and most experienced editors, Emil Meurling and Johan Person. While Meurling taught Brown the basics of newspaper work, Person, considered by Brown "the greatest of all Swedish-American journalists," instilled in the young editor the idea that Swedish-American journalism had a "mission" to enlighten and guide its readers.[7]

Eventually, not even the friendship and guidance of Meurling and Person were enough to keep Brown at *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*. In early 1913, he had decided to get married and asked Turnblad for a raise, but the publisher turned him down. Unbeknownst to Turnblad, however, Brown had been offered the editorship of *Svenska Canada-Tidningen* in Winnipeg, a position that would pay a weekly salary of $25, $10 more than at *Posten*; and, after Turnblad's refusal, he swiftly accepted that offer.[8]

The move to Canada changed Nils F. Brown's working conditions significantly, exposing him, for the first time, to the challenges and difficulties facing the majority of editors in the Swedish immigrant press. As he soon found out, the five-editor staff, huge circulation and excellent finances of *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* were all exceptional, and the ever-present economic problems, sole editor and barely 5,000 readers of *Svenska Canada-Tidningen* were far more typical of Swedish-language publishing in North America.[9]

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[6] Brown autobiography, 6-7.

[7] Brown, "Tidningsveteranen Emil Meurling 70 år," *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* (hereafter, *SAT*), 29 September 1938, 2; Brown autobiography, 11; Brown, "Svensk-amerikansk tidningspress," *Svea*, 5 November 1953, 4, 5.

[8] Brown autobiography, 8-9; "Ur svensk-amerikansk press-historia," *Canada-Tidningen*;(hereafter, *CT*), 3 October 1940, 3.

[9] *Forum*, 15 November 1919, 6; "En återblick," *SCT*, 20 November 1919, 2.

Since its start in 1894, the Winnipeg paper had led a tenuous life and gone through several owners and various names. True to that tradition, Brown's first six months as editor proved trying. The finances of the paper were dismal, and by summer 1913 *Svenska Canada-Tidningen* was more than $6,000 in debt. The paper was saved by the appearance of P. M. Dahl, publisher of *Norrøna*, the Norwegian-language weekly in Winnipeg. He took over *Canada-Tidningen* in the summer of 1913 and set about to "reconstruct the business from the bottom up," issuing $10,000 worth of new shares. Brown later credited Dahl with extricating the paper from a "financial swamp."[10]

Unfortunately, the tightening national economy, in the wake of the outbreak of World War I, dealt a blow to whatever hopes *Canada-Tidningen* had of getting its finances in order. Advertisers canceled ads or neglected to pay for them, and by early 1915, Brown told readers that the paper would have to "rely almost exclusively on subscription revenues."[11] Compounding the problem of falling revenue was a wartime-related rise in the costs of newsprint and production. In late 1917, increasing expenses forced Dahl to raise the price of the paper from $1 to $1.50, and the following summer he again resorted to issuing new shares to raise revenue. That step, and the end of the war a few months later, brightened *Canada-Tidningen's* financial prospects, and at the end of 1918, revenues were growing "slowly but surely," according to Dahl.[12]

Economic difficulties were but one consequence of the world war. Equally problematic were wartime restrictions on the press in general and foreign-language newspapers in particular. In early 1916, Brown responded to the repressive wartime atmosphere by dismissing, indignantly, accusations by a reader that his paper was pro-German, declaring it essentially neutral but with its sympathies on the Allied side. Soon Brown was having problems with the articles of one of his main contributors, Rudolf Einhardt, whose staunchly pro-German attitude gained the paper the attention of the government censors in Ottawa and resulted in a formal warning that the articles could put Brown in prison. Facing that threat, the editor on at least one occasion felt compelled to censor letters to the editor before publishing them, and in early 1918 he cautioned readers "not to touch on the current war at all." He also was shaken by a personal visit from the chief censor.[13]

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[10] "En återblick"; *SCT*, 10 December 1913, 4; Brown autobiography, 17; "Norsk är svensk tidningsveteran," *SAT*, 19 January 1939, 1, 2; Konstantin Fleming, "Från pionjärtiden," *SCT*, 19 December 1917, 1.

[11] SCT, 7 October 1914, 4; "Till våra prenumeranter," *SCT*, 24 February 1915, 4.

[12] "En återblick"; "Norsk är svensk"; "De som vilja smita," *SCT*, 19 July 1916, 4; *SCT*, 28 November 1917, 4; "Till våra landsmän i Canada!" *SCT*, 25 July 1918, 4.

[13] "En egendomlig och oväntad anklagelse," *SCT*, 5 January 1916; "Hugget och stucket," *SCT*, 14 November 1918, 4; Brown autobiography, 20; Brown, "Nu kan det förtäljas!" *CT*, 23 February 1939,

On balance, however, the war had a much greater impact on the Swedish-American press than on its counterpart north of the border. Swedish-Canadian papers emerged from the war years relatively unaffected, but over the Swedish-language press in the United States the conflict was to cast a long shadow. In the wake of the war, the number of papers fell by almost 30 percent, from 50 to 35, the first substantial drop in the history of the press.[14]

In the fall of 1919, Brown and *Canada-Tidningen* parted ways. The editor had moved increasingly to the left politically during the war, and he claimed in his farewell editorial that his political differences with Dahl made it impossible for him to continue at the paper. The editor would later admit, however, that the claim about clashing with his publisher over politics was not true, and Brown's real reason for leaving was his desire to start his own publication. Two months after resigning as the editor of *Svenska Canada-Tidningen*, he brought out *Forum*, "a radical intellectual organ for farmers and workers."[15]

Brown's eighteen months with that publication were an unhappy experience, showing that he had little aptitude for the business side of publishing. His magazine lost money almost from the start, and Brown's solution to that problem was disastrous. He used funds from an immigrant bank established by him and his partner to cover *Forum's* losses, and when the transactions were discovered in 1921, Brown was arrested on charges of embezzlement. The editor was saved only by the intervention of Dahl, who paid his bail and allowed Brown to use *Svenska Canada-Tidningen* for a successful appeal to his countrymen for money to repay his creditors. Brown himself had to sell everything he owned to contribute to the settling of *Forum's* debts, and he was also dismissed from the editorship of the magazine.[16] Penniless and without full-time employment, Brown chose to leave Winnipeg in the late spring of 1921, moving back to Minneapolis in hopes of resuming his newspaper career.

After a few months of freelance work for *Svenska Canada-Tidningen* and *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*, Brown was presented with an opportunity for full-time employment in August, when *Svenska Kuriren* in Chicago offered him a

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2, 5-6; *SCT*, 18 April 1917, 4; "Varen försiktige!" *SCT*, 27 February 1918, 4; *SCT*, 17 October 1918, 4; "Norsk är svensk"; "En återblick."

[14] Ayer's, 1918-26.

[15] Brown autobiography, 25; *Forum*, 31 October 1919; "Tack och Farväl," *SCT*, 28 August 1919, 2.

[16] Brown autobiography, 25-27; *Forum*, 15 November 1919, 1; *Forum*, 29 November 1919, 1; *Forum*, 1 February 1920, 3; *Forum*, 15 February 1920, 3; "En förklaring och ett bemötande," *SCT*, 5 May 1921, 4; "Till den svenska allmänheten," *SCT*, 7 April 1921, 4; "The Forum Publishing Co. Ltd's Cirkulär," *SCT*, 21 Apri 1921, 4; "En omtvistad insamling och en appell," *SCT*, 5 May 1921, 1.

position as assistant editor. Accepting, Brown once again found himself working for one of the large newspapers in Swedish-America, and he seemed to enjoy it thoroughly. Smaller than its hometown rivals, *Svenska Amerikanaren* and *Svenska Tribunen-Nyheter*, *Svenska Kuriren* circulated 40,000 copies in the 1920s. That was, essentially, as many as before the world war, and *Kuriren's* fortunes were typical of the major papers in the Swedish-language press, whose main experience of the war had been a slight drop in circulation. The failures during and immediately after the war years had overwhelmingly occurred among minor papers in communities with small Swedish populations. Not surprisingly, these papers were the least able to deal with rising production costs.[17]

Published by seventy-one-year-old Alexander J. Johnson, *Kuriren* was a feisty paper, with an editorial page respected and feared for its sharpness and wit. The new staff member admired Johnson's journalistic skills and liked his delight in controversy, expressed in Johnson's assurance to Brown that the paper's editors could "yell as much as you like, particularly at ministers and good templars, as long as you can prove what you have written is true."[18] Beside Brown and Johnson, the *Kuriren* staff consisted of one other editor, Erik G. Westman, and the duty of filling most of the paper's columns fell on Westman and Brown. Often finding it hard to compete with the more numerous editors of *Svenska Amerikanaren* and *Tribunen-Nyheter*, the two *Kuriren* journalists at times resorted to bribing one of their colleagues at *Amerikanaren* with speakeasy drinks to obtain local news items.[19]

In the spring of 1923, Brown left Chicago to return once again to Minneapolis, where he had been offered to rejoin the staff of *Svenska Amerikanska Posten*. His new employer, Magnus Martinson, had bought *Posten* from Swan Turnblad in 1920, and Brown would always speak of him as "a decent man" in comparison with the paper's former publisher. Above all, Brown seemed to like that Martinson rarely interfered with editorial decisions and mostly delegated the responsibility to Emil Meurling. Working with his old friend as de facto chief suited Brown well, and he claimed that work at *Posten* "proceeded in the best atmosphere imaginable."[20]

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[17] "Från Utsiktstornet," *SAP*, 15 June 1921, 9; "En ny medarbetare," *SCT*, 7 April 1921, 2; *Svenska Kuriren* (herafter, *SK*), 4 August 1921, 10; Brown autobiography, 30, 15; *Ayer's*, 1915-26; Oliver Linder, "Svensk-amerikanska tidningspressen," in Karl Hildebrand and Axel Fredenholm, eds., *Svenskarna i Amerika* (Stockholm: Historiska förlaget, 1925), 187.

[18] J. Oscar Backlund, *A Century of the Swedish-American Press* (Chicago: Swedish-American Newspaper Company, 1951), 34; Brown autobiography, 30.

[19] Brown autobiography, 32-34.

[20] Brown autobiography, 36-40; Brown, "En tidnings saga," *Arbetaren*, 22 September 1927, 1; Brown, "Ur svensk-amerikansk press-historia"; *SAP*, 23 May 1923, 6; *SK*, 17 May 1923, 7; Marie-Louise Sallnäs, "Emil Meurling and Svenska Amerikanska Posten," *SPHQ* 32 (1, 1981): 53-55.

Unfortunately, it became clear after a few years that Magnuson lacked his predecessor's business acumen. By 1927 he had driven *Svenska Amerikanska Posten* close to bankruptcy and was forced to step down as publisher. His successor turned out to be Turnblad, which had immediate consequences for Brown, who found himself without employment. Although Brown claimed he left *Posten* rather than accept the salary reductions mandated by Turnblad, others associated with the paper maintained that Turnblad refused to keep Brown on the staff. It is difficult to believe that Brown voluntarily would have chosen unemployment, because no other openings for Swedish-American journalists were in evidence in Minneapolis at the time.[21]

Brown now felt the effects of the falling number of Swedish-American papers first hand, for by the late 1920s, larger papers began to join the ranks of failing publications. *Svenska Amerikanska Posten's* main Minneapolis rival, *Svenska Folkets Tidning*, folded the year Brown left Turnblad's paper. Two years later, the same fate befell Brown's former employer in Chicago, *Svenska Kuriren*. After holding relatively steady during the mid-20s, the number of weekly newspapers in Swedish was beginning to drop again toward the end of the decade.[22]

Without prospects for a full-time position, Brown went through a difficult year. He secured a temporary editorship at *Arbetaren*, a New York Socialist weekly to which he had contributed freelance work since the early 1920s, but his tenure there only lasted a few weeks, and by the end of October 1927 he was back in Minneapolis. His source of income for the next several months was likely the publicity work he did for Svenska Amerika-Linjen, a Swedish steamship line.[23]

In July 1929, Brown finally returned to full-time work in the Swedish-American press, when he accepted the position as editor of *Svenska Pressen*, a small weekly in Spokane, Washington. The northwest corner of the United States had a thriving Swedish community, concentrated to Spokane in the east and Seattle and Tacoma in the west, and it supported no less than four

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[21] *SAP*, 7 September 1927, 6; Sallnäs, 51; Brown, "En tidnings saga"; Brown autobiography, 34, 41, 53; Karl Hellberg to Ernst Skarstedt, 3 September 1927, Skarstedt papers, University of Washington; L. Gustafsson to Skarstedt, 15 October 1927; Ernst Skarstedt papers, Riksföreningen Sverigekontakt.

[22] Oliver Linder, "The Swedish-American Press," in Erik G. Westman and E. Gustav Johnson, eds., *The Swedish Element in America* (Chicago, Swedish-American Biographical Society, 1931), 338; *Ayer's*, 1927-32.

[23] Brown autobiography, 28-29, 57-59; Thor Borg to Anna Lenah Elgström, 14 November 1927; Brown to Elgström, 13 December 1927, Elgström papers, Royal Library, Stockholm; Arvid Skoglund to J.G.R. Banér, 8 August 1928, Banér papers, University of Michigan; *Svenska Tribunen-Nyheter* (hereafter, *STN*), 1 April 1936, 1.

newspapers in Swedish. *Svenska Journalen* and *Svenska Pacific-Tribunen* in Seattle were the largest, circulating about 9,000 copies each, followed by *Svenska Pressen* with 3,000 and *Puget Sound Posten* in Tacoma with 1,600.[24]

Brown was soon to find out, however, that the newspaper business had grown precarious as the 1920s were coming to an end. The 1931 New Year's greeting in *Pressen* mentioned that "the difficulties have been numerous" during 1930, and his autobiography characterized the newspaper as a "hopeless" business venture. Allan Nelson, the publisher who had hired Brown, soon gave up, and the printing firm that took over the paper sold it to Brown and *Pressen's* advertising manger, Gustaf Karlstén. The new owners had no greater success than Nelson, and Brown began to look for employment elsewhere.[25] In January 1931, he moved on to Seattle and *Svenska Journalen*.

It was in Seattle that Brown was to feel the full impact of the Great Depression on the Swedish-American press. As he looked back at 1931 he thought it had been "the hardest year we have ever lived through" due to the effect of the economic crisis on business.[26] Although he claimed in 1932 that *Journalen* was in fact gaining in circulation, his autobiography acknowledges that widespread unemployment made it hard for subscribers to pay for the paper.[27] Under these circumstances and with his dismal experience as a publisher of *Forum* and *Svenska Pressen*, it is puzzling why Brown and a partner in early 1934 decided to lease *Journalen* from the publishing company that owned it. Not surprisingly, Brown had no better luck the third time he tried his hand at Swedish-language publishing, and by August 1934 he was forced to admit that he did not know how things would turn out. The owners decided the matter for him when they terminated the leasing arrangement in early 1935, noting that "the grim times and the resulting economic pressure" called for a change. As the lease ended, so did Brown's connection with *Svenska Journalen*.[28]

He had grown to like Seattle, however, and wanted to stay, and he was given that opportunity when *Svenska Tribunen-Nyheter* in Chicago offered him a position as its Seattle representative. His new position required him not only to write a weekly column and contribute items from Seattle and the West Coast but

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[24] *Ayer's*, 1929-33; Brown autobiography, 64; *Svenska Pressen* (hereafter, *SP*), 31 July 1929, 4.
[25] Brown autobiography, 62-65; *SP*, 31 December 1930, 4; *SP*, 7 May 1930, 4; *SP*, 4 February 1931, 4; *Ayer's*, 1929-30.
[26] "Vid årsskiftet," *Svenska Journalen* (hereafter, *SJ*), 31 December 1931, 8.
[27] *SJ*, 29 December 1932, 4; Brown autobiography, 70.
[28] Brown to Harry Fabbe, 16 August 1834, Fabbe papers, University of Washington; *SJ*, 7 February 1835, 2; Brown autobiography, 70.

also to solicit subscriptions and advertising, but that apparently did not bother him.[29]

Although Brown himself had found employment, the impact of the Depression on the Swedish-American press continued to be felt in Seattle. By the end of 1935, *Svenska Journalen* had absorbed first *Oregon-Posten* in Portland and then *Puget Sound Posten,* changing its name to *Svenska Posten* in the process and making Seattle and Spokane the only cities in the Pacific Northwest with Swedish-American newspapers. A merger on the national level was more worrisome to Brown, for it entailed the absorption of *Svenska Tribunen-Nyheter* by *Svenska Amerikanaren* in the spring of 1936. His relationship with the new *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* was never good, and it soured for good after a change of editors in the spring of 1939. The new management published fewer and fewer of Brown's pieces, and after a few months it abolished its Seattle position altogether.[30]

The disappearance of *Tribunen-Nyheter* meant that Chicago had only one large Swedish-language newspaper left in the late 1930s, and as the decade came to an end, a final blow was dealt to the press in another of Swedish-America's major cities. Within two years, Minneapolis lost its last two weekly newspapers in Swedish. The smaller, *Minnesota Stats Tidning*, ceased publication in 1939, and the following year saw the demise of the paper that had figured so prominently in Brown's career, *Svenska Amerikanska Posten.*[31]

For Brown, the loss of his position with *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* spelled the end of his full-time career in the Swedish-American press. Once again, he turned to freelance work, primarily for his old friend P. M. Dahl at *Canada-Tidningen*, and he also sent articles to newspapers in Sweden. Dahl did, in fact, offer him the editorship of *Canada-Tidningen*, but Brown declined to move back to Canada. Instead, he decided to look outside the press for employment, and in December 1940 he moved to Los Angeles and enrolled at an institute for "drugless healing" that a former newspaper colleague had started. After a few months of study earned him a physiotherapist's degree, the ex-editor began working as a masseur in Hollywood. It was not a job that Brown liked, but he claimed it paid better than Swedish-American journalism, and his new career lasted until the early 1950s. After living off his savings for a few years,

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[29] *STN*, 6 February 1935, 1; Brown autobiography, 71.
[30] *Puget Sound Posten*, 13 December 1835, 1; Brown autobiography, 73; *SAT*, 23 March 1938, 1.
[31] Lilly Setterdahl, *Swedish-American Newspapers* (Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana College, 1981); *SAT*, 28 May 1936, 1; "Ur svensk-amerikansk presshistoria."

Brown left California and the United States in the spring of 1953 and returned to Sweden, where he died in October 1960.[32]

As Brown spent the last 20 years of his life away from the newspaper offices of the Swedish-American press, that press continued to decline. Between 1940 and 1950, the number of weekly newspapers in Swedish sank to 15, and the year of Brown's death, that figure was down to seven. Only *Svenska Amerikanaren Tribunen* in Chicago and *Svea* in Worcester, Massachusetts, remained among the giants of the past, circulating 27,000 and 30,000 copies, respectively. In New York City, *Nordstjernan* claimed a circulation of 8,000, and in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Austin, Texas, dedicated veterans of the press were putting out four more Swedish-language papers, varying in size between 3,000 and 1,500.[33]

Not surprisingly, the decline of the Swedish-American press affected not only Nils F. Brown's career but also his view of that press. When Brown first discussed the Swedish-language press he was at *Svenska Canada-Tidningen*, and the Swedish-language newspapers of North America were vital and growing, nourished by a continuing influx of new immigrants. To Brown, the main goal of this prosperous press should be preserving Swedish culture in America, engaging, in the case of *Canada-Tidningen*, in "a serious and sincere attempt to spread Swedish culture and maintain the language of our fathers."[34] Characteristic of these years of vitality of the immigrant group and its press was a stress on the newspaper as a voice for the Swedish immigrants in a multiethnic society. In 1916 Brown claimed that the obligation of the newspapers was to "fight fearlessly for the Swedish cause," and he noted that the welfare of the immigrant community depended on its press "speaking its mind, where it thinks there is something which harms our countrymen or impedes their progress in the new country."[35]

Brown's view of the Swedish immigrant press was, not surprisingly, changed by his gradual move to the political left in the late 1910s. In 1918, he described the ideal newspaper as "independent," "liberal and democratic," "fearless," and open to opposing views. Moreover, it should "speak for the people against capitalism" and be "sympathetic to all popular movements," such

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[32] "Red. Nils F:son Brown avlägger läkarexamen," *CT*, 22 May 1941, 1; "Hört och hänt," *Svenska Posten*, 12 October 1960, 4; Brown autobiography, 28, 77-78; Brown to Elgström, 15 August 1950; "Vår medarbetare," *CT*, 25 January 1940, 2; Brown to Vilhelm Moberg, 11 November 1951, Moberg Papers, Royal Library; *Göteborgs-Posten*, 2 April 1953; *Dagens Nyheter*, 5 October 1960, 23; "Nils F:son Brown avliden," *CT*, 13 October 1960.

[33] *Ayer's*, 1940-60.

[34] "Allvarets ord," *SCT*, 1 October 1913, 4.

[35] "Till våra prenumeranter," *SCT*, 23 February 1916, 4.

as labor, peace, and temperance. Still, he retained the stress on its function within the immigrant community, noting that the paper must maintain "the Swedish mentality" and be the "best friend" of Swedish community organizations.[36]

In the 1920s, Brown's political leanings made his opinion of the Swedish-American press largely critical. Discussing the lot of the editors in *Canada-Tidningen* in 1921, Brown characterized the members of his profession as a "proletariat" who enjoyed little prestige and were badly paid. Brown went on to accuse readers of being indifferent and newspaper publishers of caring only about revenues.[37] Brown's criticism was even sharper in *Arbetaren*, not surprising in light of that paper's socialist perspective. In an essay in *Landkänning*, *Arbetaren's* annual, Brown accused the Swedish-American newspapers of being political reactionaries, and a comment on the 1924 election made the charge that many papers were venal, selling their editorial viewpoints for political advertising. Moreover, the press was "Americanizing" the immigrants by supplying readers with "the worst kind of spiritual muck" rather than seeking to preserve Swedish culture by promoting Swedish-American literature.[38]

Still, the press criticized by Brown during the 1920s was seen, for all its fault, as a prosperous immigrant institution. When that prosperity waned during the economic crisis of the 1930s, Brown's views changed once again. In editorials in *Svenska Journalen* in 1931, Brown reiterated, essentially, what he had written in *Canada-Tidningen* almost 20 years earlier: the press was "not only to function as a connecting link between the Swedish-born out here, but also to preserve Swedishness in America . . . [and] be a link between the culture which we once left behind and the one in which we now live."[39] What threatened this basic purpose was that newspapers pressed by hard economic times were introducing English in their columns in an attempt to attract the children of the original immigrants, but that, to Brown, was a "betrayal," because preserving the Swedish language was essential to preserving Swedishness.[40]

By 1938 he had grown pessimistic, noting in articles in *Canada-Tidningen* that Swedish-language newspapers "no longer could expect days of glory but in many cases are fighting a difficult and evidently hopeless battle" because of the world war, rising production costs, decreasing immigration to America, and

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[36] Brown, "Pressens uppgift," *SCT*, 17 April 1918, 1, 6.
[37] Brown, "Min egen spalt," *SCT*, 12 May 1921, 2; Brown, "Min egen spalt," *SCT*, 9 June 1921, 2.
[38] Brown, "Svensk-amerikansk litteratur: Hvarför den ej kunnat blomstra," *Landkänning*, 1923, 18; "Valet och svensk-amerikanska prässen," *Arbetaren*, 4 December 1924, 4.
[39] *SJ*, 12 February 1931, 4.
[40] *SJ*, 26 March 1931, 9.

"general Americanization and a wilting interest in things Swedish."[41] Defining the function of the press in these somber circumstances, Brown considered the maintenance of ties with Sweden the most important part because a cultural heritage could not be preserved without contact with the old homeland. Next to it was the function as a link between Swedish immigrants across the nation, vital to the survival of the immigrant community. Brown thought that the Swedish-American press had realized the importance of this function by taking a wider perspective and increasingly defining the community as national rather than local. Although the series urged immigrant newspapers to adapt to changing times, Brown reiterated his opposition to compromising on the issue of language.[42]

The old editor took one last look at the Swedish immigrant press in a lecture broadcast by the Swedish radio corporation in 1953. Blending historical statistics with personal anecdotes, Brown listed the surviving papers and credited them with preserving Swedish in America, in contrast to Swedish-American churches and organizations, which long ago had made the change to English. Concluding, he was still unwilling to admit that the days of the press were numbered. Although he had long since retired from the Swedish-American press, the veteran journalist remained one of its staunchest supporters.[43]

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[41] Brown, "Skall den svenska pressen i Amerika leva?" *CT*, 24 February 1938, 1.
[42] Brown, "Skall den svenska pressen i Amerika leva?" (articles in *CT*, 3 March 1938, 1; 10 March 1938, 1; 17 March 1938, 1, 4.)
[43] Brown, "Svensk-amerikansk tidningspress."

Academic Migration: Sweden and the United States

Dag Blanck*

During the past two centuries contacts between Sweden and the United States have developed in different ways. One important dimension of Swedish-American contacts and of Swedish migration to America has been that of higher education, a field which has been important to Nils William Olsson in many ways.[1] More specifically, this article discusses the role of American higher education for Sweden and Swedish scholarship through an examination of Swedish students in American universities and colleges and the impact of American academic life on Sweden.

There is a long tradition, extending back to the Middle Ages, of Swedish students and scholars traveling to universities on the European continent.[2] For natural reasons, the United States entered into the Swedish academic world at a relatively late stage. It is not clear who the first Swede to study at an American university was, but around 1850 several academics visited the U.S. and took part in the quite lively public discourse in Sweden about the character of the new American republic. One scholar has maintained that Per Erik Bergfalk, professor of jurisprudence, a liberal politician and a close friend of Fredrika Bremer, was the first Swedish university professor to make a study tour in the U.S. in 1849 and 1850.[3] His positive impressions of the United States came to play an important role in the contemporary Swedish political debate.[4] The reform

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[1] This article is based on my previously published study "The Impact of the American Academy in Sweden," in *Networks of Americanization. Aspects of the American Influence in Sweden*, eds. Rolf Lundén and Erik Åsard (Uppsala, 1992).

[2] For a thorough discussion of Swedes studying abroad see Sten Lindroth's standard work on Swedish intellectual history, *Svensk Lärdomshistoria*. The time before 1550 is covered in *Svensk Lärdomshistoria. Medeltiden. Reformationen* (Stockholm, 1975), 52-63, 119-126, and 216-222; the period 1610-1720 is dealt with in *Svensk Lärdomshistoria. Stormaktstiden* (Stockholm, 1975), 56-65; and the eighteenth century in *Svensk Lärdomhistoria. Frihetstiden* (Stockholm, 1978), 45-48. For the seventeenth century see also Lars Nihlén, *Peregrinatio Academica. Det svenska samhället och de utrikes studieresorma under 1600-talet* (Lund, 1983). For Anglo-Swedish contacts in the eighteenth century see Sven Rydberg, *Svenska studieresor till England under frihetstiden* (Uppsala, 1951).

[3] Harald Elovson, "Den liberala Amerikabilden i Sverige," in *Amerika och Norden*, ed. Lars Åhnebrink (Uppsala, 1964), 108-09.

[4] Nils Runeby, *Den gamla världen och den nya. Amerikabild och emigrationsuppfattning i Sverige 1820-1860* (Uppsala, 1969), 373-376.

educator Per Adam Siljeström was another Swedish visitor to the U.S. at this time, who with a grant from the government studied the educational system in the new American republic. Upon his return to Sweden, Siljeström promoted a very positive view of the American educational system, through lectures and publications.[5]

Swedish students made their entry into American universities, both as undergraduates and as graduate students, in larger numbers after World War I, and it has been estimated that there were about sixty Swedish students each year in American universities and colleges in the 1920s.[6] The real increase in the size of the Swedish student population in the United States came after World War II, and the number of Swedish students has doubled each decade since the early sixties. In the beginning of the 1990s, it was estimated at about 1,700 per year, which ranks Sweden as number 48 on the list of countries sending students to the U.S.[7]

The institutional basis of Swedish-American educational relations is well developed. In 1919 the Sweden-America Foundation, an organization primarily funded by contributions from Swedish industry, was established, and for many years, grants from the Foundation were among the few economic sources for Swedes who wished to study in the United States. Over the years, the Foundation has awarded about 3,700 scholarships, both undergraduate and graduate, half of which have been given out since 1960.[8] In 1952 the Swedish Fulbright Commission was established jointly by the Swedish and U.S. governments. Sweden thus joined 26 other countries in what is perhaps the best-known exchange program between the U.S. and foreign nations.[9] The Swedish Commission has awarded a total of about 550 fellowships over the years, almost exclusively to graduate students and post-doctoral scholars.[10] Other institutions, such as the government-sponsored Swedish Institute and the Rotary Foundation, also award scholarships for study in the U.S. Apart from these organizations,

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[5] See Per Adam Siljeström, *Resa i Förenta Staterna*, 2 vols. (Stockholm, 1852 & 1854) for Siljeström's own account. Volume I is devoted to education in the U.S. See also Runeby, *Den gamla världen och den nya*, 376-383, for a discussion of Siljeström's impact on the Swedish debate.

[6] W. Reginald Wheeler, *The Foreign Student in America* (New York, 1925), 307-11.

[7] Reliable statistics in this field are difficult to both locate and assess. My computations are based on UNESCO's publications *Statistics of Students Abroad* (Paris, 1971, 1976, 1982), and Marianthi Zikopolous, ed., *Open Doors 1988/1989. Report on International Educational Exchange* (New York, 1989).

[8] Dag Blanck, *Sverige-Amerika Stiftelsen. De första sjuttio åren 1919-1989* (Stockholm, 1989), 29, 38-39.

[9] For a comprehensive overview of the Fulbright program until the mid-sixties, see Walter Johnson and Francis J. Colligan, *The Fulbright Program. A History* (Chicago, 1965).

[10] [Swedish Fulbright Commission] *Alumni Directory 1953-1977* (Stockholm, 1977).

funding for studies in the U.S. has also come from other private foundations and, in recent years, from the government-supported student loan program.

A number of exchange agreements also exist between Swedish and American universities. However, a large number of Swedish researchers, especially in the natural sciences, technology, and medicine, also find their ways to the U.S. through direct contacts with American universities and through joint research projects, sometimes even funded by the U.S.

In 1923 the chairman of the Sweden-America Foundation, the Nobel laureate in chemistry, Svante Arrhenius, pointed out that the U.S. offered particularly good opportunities for studies and research in technology, the natural sciences, and economics, and therefore maintained that the Foundation should emphasize these fields among its scholarships.[11] If medicine and the social sciences are added to this list, it includes the major disciplines that have attracted Swedish students and researchers to the U.S. Table 1 shows, by faculty, scholarships awarded by the two major institutions, the Sweden-America Foundation and the Fulbright Commission. Figures from the Fulbright Commission are only available for 1953-1977.

Table 1. Scholarships awarded for graduate and postgraduate studies in the U.S. by the Sweden-America Foundation and the Fulbright Commission 1919-1987 by faculty and decade. In percent.

	-1949	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
Humanities	8	13	16	14	9
Social Sciences	30	31	36	32	35
Natural Sciences	9	17	21	21	27
Engineering	37	30	17	20	17
Medicine	9	6	8	10	10
Agriculture	7	3	2	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100
N	274	261	419	353	265

Source: Annual reports for Sweden-America Foundation 1919-1988 (Stockholm, 1919-1988); [Swedish Fulbright Commission] *Alumni Directory 1953-1977* (Stockholm, 1977). N.B. A few scholarships in theology and law have been included in humanities and social sciences, respectively. The differences in total figures reflect the fact that data for the Fulbright fellowships are only available for 1953-1977.

[11] Blanck, *Sverige-Amerika Stiftelsen,* 30.

The figures show that the social sciences have consistently drawn Swedes throughout this century, with roughly a third of the scholarships awarded in these fields. The most common field of study in this category has been business administration, particularly popular during the 1970s and 1980s, when a third of all scholarships in business administration were awarded. The lure of American business schools has been very strong, indeed, among Swedish business students in the last several decades. Other common subjects in the social sciences have been economics, political science, sociology, and psychology. The latter three have been particularly popular since 1960.

Engineering has also attracted a great number of Swedish students to the U.S., particularly before 1960. There is a long-standing tradition for Swedes to study engineering and gain practical experience in America. It has been estimated that, of all engineers graduated from the various Swedish engineering schools between 1800 and 1929, approximately 15% spent one or several years in the United States.[12] For many Swedish engineers, a period in the United States formed a natural and beneficial part of their education. The head of the large electrical engineering company ASEA, J. Sigfrid Edström, actively recruited engineers who had been to America during the 1930s and 1940s, as he considered their training superior. This American tradition among Swedish engineers is still very strong, and the Sweden-America Foundation in particular has awarded great numbers of scholarships in the field.[13]

The natural sciences have become increasingly more important subjects of study since the end of World War II. Physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, and computer science are the most common disciplines in this category. For obvious reasons, scholarships in computer science have been very common in the 1970s and 1980s. A similar development can be seen in medicine. It is, however, very likely that the figures for the natural sciences and especially medicine as shown in Table 1 are too low. Many Swedish scholars in these fields have established close cooperation with U.S. institutions of higher learning, which has resulted in frequent research and study sojourns in America outside both official exchange programs and scholarship programs such as the Sweden-America Foundation or the Fulbright Commission. The scope of these contacts is at present unknown, but surely considerably larger than the figures in Table 1 suggest.

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[12] Sten Carlsson, *Swedes in North America 1638-1988. Technical, Cultural, and Political Achievements* (Stockholm, 1988), 58. See also Lars O. Olsson, "Amerikaemigrationen och återvändande svenska ingenjörer, 1890-1930," in *Göteborgs-emigranten,* vol. 6. (1997) and "To see how things were done in a big way," *Technology & Culture,* vol. 39. (1998).

[13] Blanck, *Sverige-Amerika Stiftelsen,* 31.

Agriculture and forestry have always been small fields, although of greater significance before the war than today. Scholarships in the humanities, finally, have also been relatively infrequent. Popular subjects of study in this category include literature, history, and linguistics.

Why has the United States come to play such a dominant role in Swedish international academic contacts? Concerning graduate students and post-doctoral researchers several reasons can be discerned. First, the American academic world has expanded greatly during this century. The student population of American universities and colleges has been estimated at half a million in 1920. By 1960 this figured had increased to 3.4 million, and in 1987 the number of students in American higher education had reached the staggering figure of 12.5 million.[14]

This means that the American academy has become so large and so resourceful that what one scholar has called "the sheer mass of the American academic and intellectual community" is bound to appeal to Swedish and other foreign academics alike. In the early 1980s, between 700,000 and 800,000 persons were active as teachers and administrators at more than 3,000 academic institutions in the U.S. Some disciplines in the U.S. counted more than twice the members of the entire Swedish academy. For example, there were about 25,000 psychologists in American universities, while Sweden employed *a total* of 11,000 persons at some 40 universities.[15]

As a part of this expansion, the financial resources available at many American universities have also increased greatly. An unprecedented infusion of funds into the U.S. academic sector took place during the 1960s, partly as a result of the so-called Sputnik effect of the late 1950s, when fears of falling behind the Soviet Union were prevalent. The long-term beneficial results of this stimulation for the vitality of U.S. universities are probably difficult to over-estimate, and have been a great attraction for foreign students and scholars.

Moreover, the American university structure itself with tenure, promotions, and matching offers—in other words the American academic marketplace with mobile scholars ready to go on to other institutions when the circumstances are suitable—means that new and particularly interesting fields of research can develop quickly into what Ulf Hannerz has described as "a scholarly industry, not likely to be matched in any other national academia." The American academy is thus not only big; it also seems to have the capacity of quickly

[14] Ibid., 24.

[15] Ulf Hannerz, "American Culture: Creolized, Creolizing" in *American Culture: Creolized, Creolizing and other lectures from the NAAS Biennial Conference in Uppsala May 28-31, 1987*, ed. Erik Åsard (Uppsala, 1988), 24.

moving to the forefront of new research, and thus of attracting scholars from all over the world. In doing so, it often incorporates scholarly traditions from all over the world, and Hannerz concludes: "Germany may have a Max Weber, France may have a Michel Foucault,...Russia a Mikhail Bakhtin...[but] it is in American scholarship that one finds a Weber industry, a Foucault industry...a Bakhtin industry."[16]

Evidence from Swedish scholars who have been part of this academic migration corroborates this view of the American universities as huge, wealthy and very energetic. A survey of Swedish natural scientists and engineers with permanent positions in U.S. universities from the late 1960s showed that opportunities for continued research and permanent employment were the dominant motivations behind their move to the U.S.[17] The Nobel laureate in economics, Bertil Ohlin, observed about his years in the American universities in the 1920s that "[t]he American universities are strongholds for education and research in a sense that a European hardly can imagine before he visits them,"[18] and another economist writing about the situation fifty years later concluded that "the lavishness and splendor of American universities are almost staggering in comparison with continental or Scandinavian institutions."[19]

But what about the large numbers of young Swedes who come to the U.S. each year to study as undergraduates or even as high school exchange students? For them, the quality and quantity of American research probably plays a smaller role in their choice of the U.S. than for graduate students and researchers. Here, the general orientation among Swedes towards the U.S. has instead played a great role. The impact of American culture, especially in its more popular and youth-oriented version, is of course noticeable all over the world, and is of great importance here. It could well be that many Swedish youth know more about American college and university life through the many "college" movies that have reached Sweden than they do about Swedish university life. This strong American presence in Sweden definitely plays an important role in making Swedish students interested in studying in the U.S.

However, it can also be argued that one reason for the specifically Swedish orientation towards the U.S. is a result of the Swedish mass emigration to the

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[16] Ibid.

[17] See two articles by Göran Friborg: "Fortsatta studier rörande forskarmigrationen," in *Nordisk Forum*, 4, (1969) and "Motives and Qualifications of Scientists and Engineers Emigrated from Sweden to the USA," in *Brain Drain and Brain Gain of Sweden* (Stockholm, 1972) [FEK-Rapport, 1], 62.

[18] Bertil Ohlin, *Bertil Ohlins memoarer. Ung man blir politiker* (Stockholm, 1972), 87.

[19] Göran Ohlin, "Economics: The Interchange of Ideas between Sweden and the United States," in *Partners in Progress. A Chapter in the American-Swedish Exchange of Knowledge*, eds. Allan Kastrup and Nils William Olsson (Minneapolis, 1977), 57.

U.S. during the latter part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, when contacts between Sweden and the United States developed to an unprecedented level. The overwhelming majority of these persons left Sweden to seek a better life, economically and socially, and did not become involved in American academic life to any large degree. It is, however, clear that thousands upon thousands of contacts were established between Sweden and the U.S. as a result of the mass emigration, many of which are still very strong today. This network of personal and family ties has bound the two countries together and created a strong awareness of and understanding for the United States in Sweden.

What were the effects on Sweden of strong American orientation in Swedish academic life? It is, of course, very difficult to measure the impact and influences of this qualitative nature and the influences have been many and in many different spheres of Swedish society. Upon returning from a year in America, one Swedish scholar observed that "America does change people...but in ways so subtle that it is hard to describe."[20] A study from the mid-1950s suggests that a majority of Swedes returning from American universities, considered themselves to have benefited from their time in America, both personally and professionally. Most of the students claimed that they had gained a broader outlook on the world, that they perceived Sweden in a new light, and that they felt that they had matured as individuals. Some answers also suggest that the American experience proved professionally advantageous, especially in the fields of technology, natural science, and business. Students in the humanities, on the other hand, seem to have had a much more difficult time in getting concrete career results out of their American experience.[21]

In 1960 a group of German Fulbright scholars expressed similar reactions. More than three-fourths of the German Fulbright fellows said that their time in the United States had benefited them professionally or personally. Of these positive Fulbrighters, 25% indicated that the American experience had directly resulted in professional advancement upon their return to Germany.[22]

An examination of 108 Swedish, Fulbright, graduate student, scholarship winners in the 1960s also suggests that a large number of this cohort pursued successful careers in Sweden following their year of study. In 1977 about 40% of them had permanent academic positions in an institution of higher learning,

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[20] Quoted in Franklin Scott, *The American Experience of Swedish Students. Retrospect and Aftermath* (Minneapolis, 1956), 96.
[21] Ibid., 96-109.
[22] Henry J. Kellerman, *Cultural Relations as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy. The Educational Exchange Program Between the United States and Germany 1945-54* (Washington, D.C., 1978), 238.

five percent as full professors. Around 20% occupied managerial positions in private industry and another 20% were found in the higher echelons of the civil service and bureaucracy. Among those with an academic career, there is a clear dominance of those active in the social and natural sciences, such as economics, business administration, mathematics, and physics.[23]

The impact of America on the Swedish academy has not only been a matter of personal growth and development. Although little systematic work has been done on the question, it is clear that many university disciplines in Sweden have been strongly affected by American developments since at least the end of World War II. This is, of course, partly a result of the strong position of American scholarship in general, but the fact that many practitioners in certain fields have established strong and often personal contacts with the U.S. is of great significance. Again, the U.S. influence seems the strongest in the social sciences, the natural sciences, and medicine, and is especially noticeable during the decades after World War II.

With regard to medicine, the first generation of Swedish anesthesiologists was trained almost entirely in the United States,[24] and it is sometimes jokingly said that there are three kinds of medical researchers in Sweden: those who currently are in the United States, those who have just returned, and those who are planning their trip. Some examples from the social sciences will further illustrate this point.[25]

Economics and business administration are two fields with long-standing American connections. Already in 1919, the leading Swedish economist, Johan Åkerman, spent a year at Harvard, and during the years that followed many prominent Swedish economists associated with the so-called Stockholm School of Economics, such as Bertil Ohlin and Gunnar Myrdal, made repeated visits to the U.S.[26] The contacts with Keynesian economics that were established at this time proved important for the development of Swedish economic policies during the 1930s. These early contacts have been sustained throughout the years, and from the last several decades, names such as Bo Södersten, Staffan Burenstam-Linder, and Ragnar Bentzel can be mentioned.

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[23] See the register of Fulbright grantees in *Alumni Directory*.

[24] Scott, *The American Experience*, 103.

[25] For further discussions of Swedish-American relations in the natural sciences, medicine, and technology see several contributions in *Partners in Progress*, Kastrup and Olsson, by leading practitioners in the respective fields.

[26] The section on economics is based on Ohlin, "Economics," 54-61.

In business administration the American influence has also been strong.[27] Lars Engwall and associates conclude that this was a gradual process through which a "network...with American scholars" was created, and although some re-orientation towards the European countries has taken place in the last ten years, the U.S. is still the dominant influence on Swedish business administration.[28] One indication is the country of destination of the foreign study visits made by students at the Stockholm School of Economics. In the 1910s, 15% went to the U.S., but by the 1930s the figure had reached 40%. Since then the U.S. has remained the dominant destination. Between 1940 and 1960 over 70% of the trips went to the U.S., and although the figure has declined somewhat since the 1960s, over 50% of the students studying abroad still went to the U.S. in the 1980s.

The same pattern can be seen in the textbooks used at the Stockholm School of Economics. By the mid-1930s, textbooks from the U.S. outnumbered those from Germany, and by the mid-1960s American textbooks were even more common than those of Scandinavian origin. In addition, several professors of business administration in the Swedish universities have been educated in the U.S. The first incumbent at Uppsala University, Sune Carlson, received his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1936, and has commented that "the experiences from Chicago...were put to use as we built up the Department of Business Administration at Uppsala."[29] Of the thirty full professors of business administration in Sweden in 1987, five had their Ph.D. degrees from U.S. universities.[30]

Pedagogy is another field in which the U.S. has played a significant role.[31] Beginning with Per Adam Siljeström in the 1850s, a long line of Swedish scholars and educators have looked to the U.S. for examples and inspiration, and one scholar has observed that "[a]fter 1945 a pilgrimage to America was seen as a necessity among researchers and practitioners in education."[32] In 1874 Hjalmar Edgren received a Ph.D. in Sanskrit at Yale University. He taught at the

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[27] The following section is based on Lars Engwall, Elving Gunnarsson, and Eva Wallersted, *Europa et Taurus. Foreign Inspiration of Swedish Business Administration* (Uppsala, 1987), 11-24.

[28] Ibid., 24.

[29] Sune Carlson, *Studier utan slut. Ekonomi, företag, människor* (Stockholm, 1983), 71.

[30] Engwall et al., *Europa et Taurus*, 21.

[31] Some examples of Swedish views of the American educational scene from the decades before and after World War II are Ester Hermansson, *I amerikanska skolor* (Stockholm, 1940); Nils Hänninger, *Ny skola- och gammal* (Stockholm, 1939); and G. A. Jaederholm, "Ett transatlantiskt universitet och dess pedadogiska fakultet. En skiss i akademisk organisation och administration," in *Studier tillägnade Efraim Liljequist,* eds. Gunnar Aspelin and Elof Åkesson (Lund, 1950).

[32] Torsten Husén, "Psychology and Education. U.S.-Swedish Scholarly Contacts in Psychology and Education," in *Partners in Progress. A Chapter in the American-Swedish Exchange of Knowledge*, eds. Allan Kastrup and Nils William Olsson (Minneapolis, 1977), 244.

University of Nebraska between 1880 and 1885 and returned to Sweden in 1890 as professor of linguistics at the newly established University of Gothenburg (*Göteborgs högskola*), becoming president of the University the following year. Some years later he returned to Nebraska, but finally settled in Sweden in 1901.[33] Edgren held high opinions of both American public schools and universities,[34] and his American experiences, e.g., in fund-raising, seem to have played an important role for him as president of the recently established private University of Gothenburg.[35]

How much has the current educational system in Sweden been shaped by influences and ideas from the United States? No systematic study of this issue exists, but several observers have pointed to Alva Myrdal's important role in introducing American educational and pedagogical ideas associated with progressivism and John Dewey in Sweden during the late 1940s.[36] Alva and Gunnar Myrdal presented these ideas in *Kontakt med Amerika* from 1941,[37] which served as an important impulse for a government commission that was working with the plans for the new, comprehensive, nine-year school.[38] Educational historian Tomas Englund has also pointed to the "utopian" ideals in progressive educational thinking, notions that fit well into the ideological climate within the Social Democratic party, as it set out to build a post-war welfare state in Sweden.[39] Another aspect of the school reforms initiated during the 1950s was the research into curriculum development and revision, where much inspiration came from similar work carried out in the U.S. during the preceding decades.[40]

Sociology, finally, was introduced as a separate discipline in Swedish universities in 1947, and was greatly influenced by American scholarship. The first incumbent professor at Uppsala, Torgny Segerstedt, has noted that "during the 1950s and 1960s, most of the younger Swedish sociologists spent a term—often a year—at some American university," and concluded that the

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[33] Elovson, "Den liberala Amerikabilden i Sverige," 94-96.

[34] Hjalmar Edgren, *Förenta Staternas folkskolor och högre lärosäten* (1879). See also Edgren's positive views of U.S. universities given at the University of Gothenburg in September, 1891 ["Högskolor, deras uppkomst och utbildning," in *Nordisk Tidskrift* (1891)].

[35] Elovson, "Den liberala Amerikabilden i Sverige," 96.

[36] I thank Professor Urban Dahllöf, Uppsala, for bringing this point to my attention.

[37] Alva och Gunnar Myrdal, *Kontakt med Amerika* (Stockholm, 1941).

[38] Husén, "Psychology and Education," 244-45; Gunnar Richardsson, *Svensk skolpolitik 1940-1945. Idéer och realiteter i pedagogisk debatt och politiskt handlande* (Stockholm, 1978), 246-249; Tomas Englund, *Samhällsorientering och medborgarfostran i svensk skola under 1900-talet* (Uppsala, 1986), vol. 2, 323-324.

[39] Englund, *Samhällsorientering och medborgarfostran*, 342.

[40] Husén, "Psychology and Education," 245. Torsten Husén and Urban Dahllöf, *Matematik och modersmålet i skola och yrkesliv. Studier i kunskapskrav, kunskapsbehållning och undervisning-suppläggning* (Stockholm, 1960) is a study of the curriculum in mathematics and Swedish language.

significance of American scholarship in sociology and in the social sciences in general for the developments in Sweden has been of "enormous importance."[41]

A final and more general observation is the fact that so many Swedes have spent considerable time in the U.S. at a fairly impressionable stage in life, and may have brought back important thoughts, ideas, and maybe even ways of looking at the world. The significance of this general American cultural baggage is hard to assess precisely, but it is not far-fetched to assume that this exposure to American society and culture has helped create an awareness of—or preparedness for—the United States in Sweden, and facilitated the many contacts between the two countries.[42] The fact that many returning students and researchers also have pursued fairly successful careers in Sweden has also been significant in this context. The list of Swedish students and researchers in the U.S. over the years sometimes looks like a "Who's Who" among Swedish politicians, businessmen, academics, and opinion makers, including more than a few senior Swedish politicians (both Prime Ministers Ingvar Carlsson and Olof Palme and party leaders Gunnar Heckscher and Bertil Ohlin) and many journalists, authors, radio and TV personalities.

The academic and educational dimensions of the Swedish-American relationship are thus substantial. Each year, numerous Swedes set out as "academic migrants" to the U.S., bringing new ideas and impulses with them back to Sweden, further strengthening the Swedish-American academic ties. In this way, education and scholarship continue to be an important part of the overall patterns of contact and exchange between Sweden and the United States.

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[41] Torgny Segerstedt, "American and Swedish Sociology" in *Partners in Progress. A Chapter in the American-Swedish Exchange of Knowledge*, eds. Allan Kastrup and Nils William Olsson (Minneapolis, 1977), 307. Cf. also Anders Gullberg, "Några punkter om svensk sociologi och dess ursprung," in *Häften för Kritiska Studier*, 3 (1970), 50 and 55. For an assessment of the situation in Political Science, see Evert Vedung, "American Political Science: A Swedish Import," in *Swedes Looking West. Aspects on Swedish-American Relations*, eds. Sture Lindmark and Tore Tallroth (Stockholm, 1983), 123-143.

[42] Cf. Olof Palme, "Swedish-American Relations," in *Swedes Looking West. Aspects on Swedish-American Relations*, eds. Sture Lindmark and Tore Tallroth (Stockholm, 1983), 18.

Two Surveys on *SAG*

James E. Erickson

In the first issue of *Swedish American Genealogist,* Nils William Olsson—who at the time was not only *SAG*'s founder but also its editor and publisher—presented the following rationale for starting the journal:

> The publication of a new genealogical journal may seem quite superfluous at a time when many of such journals seem to be as ephemeral as the life of a dragonfly. Despite the heavy odds, which seem to marshal against an undertaking of this kind, the editor has sensed for some time the need for a special forum beamed at Swedish America....
>
> It is therefore the aim of *SAG* (and we trust that this acronym does not connote any negative characteristic of the magazine's contents or style) to be a forum in which readers will find inspiration, assistance and enthusiasm in furthering their own genealogical studies....
>
> Finally, we should say that *SAG* belongs to its readers. By letting us know what you desire, we shall hope to be able to meet those desires.[1]

History has shown that Nils William's instincts were correct; and "despite the heavy odds," *SAG* has now entered its nineteenth year of publication—seventeen under Nils William's editorship and the last two under mine. Passing of time and change of leadership virtually require concomitant internal and external reviews. They require that mission and purpose be evaluated; that new goals be set and new visions be explored; that questions be asked and answered. Has *SAG* been a "special forum beamed at Swedish America"? Have *SAG* readers found "inspiration, assistance and enthusiasm in furthering their own genealogical studies"? Has *SAG* met their desires? To answer these questions and renew the dialogue with *SAG* subscribers/readers, two studies were designed and implemented.[2] This article summarizes their major results.

"Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998"

For the Eighth Annual *SAG* Genealogical Workshop held in the fall of 1998 in Salt Lake City, Utah, I was asked to lead a session for workshop participants on my vision for *Swedish American Genealogist*. This proved to be a very

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[1] See inside front cover of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1 (March 1981).

[2] The self-evaluation and subscriber/reader evaluations considered in this report are just two components among other important informational sources that could have been considered in an overall analysis of *SAG*. Therefore, the results may best be interpreted as strictly impressions.

fortuitous request for me personally. I was completing my first year as editor of a journal with a seventeen-year history about which I was not fully apprised. Therefore, in preparation for my Salt Lake City presentation, I felt compelled to read all of the back issues of *SAG*. This led to an initial analysis of this published material that developed into my internal review of *SAG*.

Both the analysis and the reasoning behind it were simplistic. I assumed that just as weekly calendars and checkbook registers reflect how individuals spend (value?) their time and money, so the total number of pages in *SAG* devoted to certain types of articles should not only reflect how its editors have apportioned publishable material but also provide insight into the priorities they have established on behalf of subscribers/readers.

I began my analysis by composing a chronologically arranged list of all articles published in *SAG* between 1981-1998 that included the following data: year of publication, length of article (i.e., number of pages), and title of article. Each article was then rearranged into one of eleven easily recognizable, but admittedly arbitrary, categories (i.e., types of articles). Compilations of total pages and the percentage of total pages for each of the eleven categories were then made. The completed, eight-page manuscript, "Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998," was made available to all participants attending the Eighth Annual *SAG* Genealogical Workshop and all *SAG* subscribers as an enclosure in the mailing of the December 1998 issue. The essential results of this analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of "Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998." Types of articles are ranked in descending order by total pages.

	Type of Article	*Total Pages*	*Percentage of Total Pages*
1.	Directories / Lists	1,355	32.9
2.	Ancestor Tables (Ahnentafeln) / Families	470	11.4
3.	Annual Indexes	449	10.9
4.	Genealogical Queries	430	10.4
5.	Biography / Personal History	427	10.4
6.	Background Info. / Educational / Geneal. Aids	357	8.7
7.	Declarations of Intention & Naturalizations	197	4.8
8.	Searching For / Finding Ancestors	128	3.1
9.	Archives / Libraries / Research Institutes	121	2.9
10.	Literature / Book Reviews	91	2.2
11.	Miscellaneous	91	2.2
	Total	4,116	99.9

The data in Table 1 are quite clear. When the entire publishing effort of *SAG* between 1981-1998 is considered, three distinct clusters emerge. The first cluster consists of just one type of article—Directories / Lists. Fully one-third (32.9%) of *SAG*'s eighteen-year output of 4,116 pages has been devoted to this category. The second cluster is composed of the next five types of articles (ranked 2-6 in Table 1), each of which represents approximately 10.4% (range 8.7%-11.4%) of total pages published between 1981-1998. Collectively, they make up 51.8% of *SAG*'s total, eighteen-year output of pages. The third cluster is composed of the last five types of articles (ranked 7-11 in Table 1), each of which represents approximately 3% (range 2.2%-4.8%) of total pages published between 1981-1998. Collectively, they make up only 15.2% of *SAG*'s total, eighteen-year output of pages.

"Subscriber Survey on *SAG*"

A second survey—"Subscriber Survey on *SAG*"—was developed as an external review instrument. It was designed to "help improve the quality and usefulness of *SAG*" to its readers. In Part 1 of this survey, respondents were asked to rate *SAG* in terms of their level of interest in each of twenty items by circling a response, based on a scale from 1 (low interest) to 5 (high interest). In Part 2 of this survey, respondents were provided the opportunity to write short responses to the following three questions: What do you like *best* about *SAG?* What do you like *least* about *SAG?* How do you think the quality and/or usefulness of *SAG* could be *improved?*

The "Subscriber Survey on *SAG*" was made available to all participants attending the Eighth Annual *SAG* Genealogical Workshop and all *SAG* subscribers as an enclosure in the mailing of the December 1998 issue. As of 1 April 1999, ninety-five individuals had returned survey forms.[3] The essential results of Part 1 (Questions 1-4) of this survey are summarized in Table 2.

Arguably, the single most useful item in the survey was Question 1—"What is your overall impression of *SAG?*" Fully 94.3% of subscribers/readers have a high (52.9%) or moderately high (41.4%) overall impression of *SAG*. This overwhelmingly positive response suggests to me that *SAG* is clearly on the right track. Interesting and rather clear-cut responses were also seen in Questions 2a-2k, which asked respondents to rank the various types of articles

[3] The total number of current *SAG* subscribers is 870—634 individuals in North America; 171 individuals in Sweden; and 65 libraries/archives. Disregarding the 65 libraries/archives, the overall response rate was 11.8% (95/805). The overall North American response rate was 13.6% (86/634) and the overall Swedish response rate was 5.3% (9/171). Surveys continue to arrive in the mail.

The overall response rate (approximately 12% of subscribers) is important to remember. Such data may not necessarily provide reliable information.

that appear in *SAG*. When the percentages of respondents choosing options 5 or 4 (signifying high or moderately high interest) are combined, certain types of articles are clearly of higher interest to *SAG* subscribers/readers. The top five (ranked in descending order) were Genealogical Aids (88.1%); Searching For (85.5%); Annual Index (82.5%); Genealogical Queries (76.7%); and Biography (70.4%).

Table 2. Results of "Subscriber Survey on *SAG*," showing the percentage of responses to each choice (1-5) for each of the twenty survey categories. Statistics were calculated from 95 surveys received by 1 April 1999.

		Interest In Survey Categories							
		High				*Low*			
	Survey Categories	5	4	3	2	1	N[+]	X[†]	SD[‡]
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)			
1.	Overall Impression	52.9	41.4	5.7	-	-	87	4.5	0.6
2a.	Genealogical Aids	67.4	20.7	10.9	1.1	-	92	4.5	0.7
2b.	Biography	37.4	33.0	24.2	3.3	2.2	91	4.0	1.0
2c.	Searching For	61.1	24.4	12.2	2.2	-	90	4.4	0.8
2d.	Declarations	30.6	30.6	28.2	10.6	-	85	3.8	1.0
2e.	Lists/Directories	38.9	21.1	31.1	7.8	1.1	90	3.9	1.1
2f.	Archives/Libraries	35.2	30.7	22.7	11.4	-	88	3.9	1.0
2g.	Ancestor Tables	19.3	21.6	34.1	13.6	11.4	88	3.2	1.2
2h.	Book Reviews	30.4	31.5	31.5	4.3	2.2	92	3.8	1.0
2i.	Genealogical Queries	56.7	20.0	17.8	4.4	1.1	90	4.3	1.0
2j.	Miscellaneous	14.4	34.4	44.4	5.6	1.1	90	3.6	0.8
2k.	Annual Index	48.4	34.1	14.3	3.3	-	91	4.3	0.8
3a.	"How to do"	65.2	19.6	14.1	1.1		92	4.5	0.8
3b.	Use of Computers	34.8	28.3	16.3	14.1	6.5	92	3.7	1.3
3c.	Use of Internet	45.6	27.8	12.2	8.9	5.6	90	4.0	1.2
4a.	Interest in Canada	8.5	4.9	20.7	14.6	51.2	82	2.0	1.3
4b.	Interest in East Coast	28.4	16.0	14.8	18.5	22.2	81	3.1	1.5
4c.	Interest in Midwest	70.7	15.2	9.8	-	4.3	92	4.5	1.0
4d.	Interest in South	11.7	2.6	23.4	22.1	40.3	77	2.2	1.3
4e.	Interest in West Coast	16.3	22.5	16.3	17.5	27.5	80	2.8	1.5

[+] N = Number of respondents. Total N = 95. Note that in all survey categories a certain percentage of respondents failed to indicate a choice.

[†] X = Mean: the average of the responses in a given category based on the 1-5 scale. A good measure for summarizing results.

[‡] SD = Standard Deviation: an index of the variability among the responses. The lower the SD, the greater the similarity of responses. In this context, a SD of 0.8-1.0 can be considered low.

Similar high interest is seen in the responses for Questions 3a-3c. Once again, if the percentages of respondents choosing either option 5 or 4 in these categories are combined, the three survey categories can be ranked as follows: "How to do" (84.8%); Use of Internet (73.4%); and Use of Computers (63.1%).

The parochial interests of *SAG* subscribers/readers are clearly delineated in responses to Questions 4a-e. Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated a high or moderately high interest in the Midwest, compared to only 42% in the East Coast, 37% in the West Coast, 13% in the South, and 10% in Canada.

Part 2 of the "Subscriber Survey on *SAG*" consisted of three questions that required written responses. What follows are compilations of respondents' answers to each of the three questions. A short compilation of unsolicited comments made by respondents is also included.

Survey Question 5: What do you like *best* about SAG?

- Can I say everything? It is one of the few things I get in the mail that I start reading the same day I get it. Not that I finish it that quickly.
- The compact format, the clarity of the writing, and the ongoing contact with people in Sweden.
- News about new sources and archives. The directories are especially useful, even if only as examples.
- Stories of people finding family in Sweden.
- The "how to" articles.
- Articles that focus on specific aspects of Swedish culture as they relate to genealogy....This kind of information is almost inherently known among Swedish-born or fluent speakers but is very difficult to obtain in the U.S. with only limited Swedish reading ability. Also interesting are the articles on research methods, the internet, and addresses of societies.
- The scholarly articles on New Sweden by Peter S. Craig and transcriptions of source material (and just lists of such) on Swedes in America (and Americans in Sweden!) pre-1850.
- I enjoy almost everything, but especially biographical articles and articles about Swedes and Swedish Americans who served in the military.
- The publication is a "keeper;" put together and set up beautifully. The articles are well written and nicely annotated.
- I always look forward to receipt of issues and usually read each number cover to cover, often going back to reread and check something at a later date.
- Articles on "how to do" Swedish genealogy, including names and addresses of places to contact for assistance and what kind of assistance they provide.
- I enjoy everything in every issue, perhaps some articles more than others. But I read it cover to cover.
- I subscribe solely for the articles about the early Swedes and Finns who settled along the Delaware River in the 1600s. I do enjoy reading some of the other articles, though.
- Personal accounts, such as the articles in the December 1998 issue written by Dooley and Oakes. They have rich genealogical information and reflect the rewards of the search.

- I enjoy *SAG*—cover to cover.
- Interesting articles of a diverse nature.
- I was able to put together cousins in Sweden with cousins in Kentucky, Montana, and California, because of the queries. What a thrill!
- Articles like [the one written by] Larry Oakes.
- That it is published by a Swedish Research location. I wish I were located closer so as to avail myself of the services at the Swenson Center.
- I don't know that there has been any article that has grabbed me except for the publishing of my Ahnentafel.
- It is interesting to learn about people and facts one didn't know.
- [Reading about] life experiences of persons who were immigrants or those researching their ancestors.
- *SAG* usually arrives promptly at the end of each quarter.
- I especially liked "Search for the 'Old Country' Enriches Life in the New."
- Information that is helpful in my own family research. Also articles of personal interest about early immigrants.
- I like *SAG* for what it gives me personally—a sense of who I am in relationship to the flow of history....Sweden and America are connected in many ways and I enjoy learning of how families came to America and what happened to them....I am still looking for one branch or two of the family...and I find that *SAG* gives me hope. I just might find them.
- Its format and the niche it fills. The broad range of topics covered. How it helps both Swedish Americans and Swedes, especially through Genealogical Queries.
- [*SAG* material] has usually been presented in a most attractive and readable style and format.
- Genealogical Queries. I use them to challenge members of [our society]; to get our group involved in helping find lost persons in history.
- {The] variety of articles and subjects, and the emphasis on accuracy and detail.
- [*SAG*] provides a lot of information that is not available elsewhere.
- Short answer—everything!
- Its handy size, the colors [on the cover], the index of contents on the cover, the old photos, and the queries section (good for interaction among readers).
- Its quality and level of scholarship, the variety and scope of the contents, and its efforts to report on resources that enable us to be aware of new items of Swedish American interest.
- Size, format, variety of articles (most very well written), and the comprehensive index.
- The listing of genealogical societies in Sweden helped me find ancestors from the 16th century. Articles about New Sweden [and] human interest stories are fun to read. Church records from Minnesota.
- Quite a lot. Difficult to pick out one or two best. [I] enjoy the Ahnentafeln.
- Its purpose and the implementation of the purpose.

•Lifestyle articles about immigrants.
•Literature reviews, especially when the original book/thesis was in Swedish.
•I like *SAG* just the way it is.
•Continued history of Swedes in Delaware.
•That it exists and continues.
•I am a fan of articles that reveal clues that might help me flesh out my own research and add to my knowledge of, say, naming patterns, migration routes, land ownership laws in Sweden, occupations held by immigrants (in Sweden and North America), and factors (economic, social and religious) prompting emigration from a given Swedish community.
•I found my family in Sweden! None of this [would have happened] without *SAG!* Love you.
•Size of magazine; font size and style; length of each issue; little advertising; Queries section.
•That there are many interesting things to read about.
•When I read some articles, I get new ideas or find someone who can help me.
•The great variety of subjects.
•[The] stories about individuals, as researched and written by present-day family members....Every issue could include such a story.
•Genealogical aids [and] stories about searches. Biographies and histories [are] usually very well done.
•The informative and high quality articles.
•Size and format are good; index of personal and place names [is] important.
•The Queries and the Ahnentafeln. They have helped me locate my relatives in Sweden and have provided ancestors I didn't know about.
•The personal biographies [and] stories about research success.
•The variety of topics and the pictures.
•I have read with interest every article in all issues....My favorites are those by persons who have "found" their Swedish roots, like Larry Oakes's article.
•The whole layout.
•Queries, ahnentafeln, and sources like applications for U.S. citizenship, where you try to identify the applicants.
•It helps me to learn about Swedish American geneaology.
•The [opportunity] to read about Swedes who emigrated and their lives in America.

Survey Question 6: What do you like *least* about SAG?

•When the balance [between] general interest and specific individuals swings toward the latter. (My relatives never seem to appear in the latter!)
•[That *SAG* is] not published every month.
•Nothing—an excellent publication.
•[*SAG*] is of very little help in genealogy searching [and has] little general information about Sweden.

•Poorly reproduced halftones.
•[What] I find the least interesting are the Ahnentafeln.
•Personally, I have zero interest in colonial New Sweden. Might be worth surveying among the readership.
•Swedish royalty and/or nobility news and its connections.
•A long article about some specific person or family that only has interest for a small group of possible readers.
•The very long delivery. It is now the beginning of March [and I just got the] December issue
•That it comes so late. I got the December 1998 issue in March 1999.
*[Note: The two previous responses were from Swedish subscribers. Fourth class mail is obviously slow, but least expensive!—Editor]
•The long lists that sometimes take up space that could be devoted to other topics of more general interest. I don't mean that lists should not be published, but I would prefer that they not take up most of an issue.
•"Anna Toffels [☺]"—the bare bones ones. Personal accounts of "how I found *farfar*" are sometimes very elementary and naïve, but interesting if the writer solved a particularly tricky problem.
•That it doesn't feature enough articles and items about genealogy in Sweden, where ultimately all Swedish-Americans (hope to) find their ancestry.
•*SAG* has tried so hard to be scholarly that few people subscribe to it. In recent years, I get it because it is tied to the Swenson Center membership.
•A lot about Minneapolis and Chicago. My family was in Kittson County, MN and it would be nice to see some lists from there sometime.
•My one, major complaint is that it is just too long between issues....Still *SAG* is worth the wait.
•Ahnentafeln—since the general interest for them must be very limited in a forum like this.
•[The] ancestor tables, which are of primary interest to their authors. However, my ambition is to have my ancestor table completed and published one day.
•Ancestor tables—they are not of much use to me and waste many pages.
•So far I have not been able to make use of lists, but I'm sure others have. Ahnentafeln are not very informative to the general public.
•Mediocre writing (sometimes, not always); dull design and appearance; some issues seem to be dominated by lists, registers and tables, leaving little room for other material of general interest and more readable.
•There is too much stress on articles like New Sweden that most of us have no connection to [and] can't relate to. Most of us are Midwesterners.
•The thing I probably like the least is that there are only four issues per year. Any hope of going to six?
•Lists of names are not generally very useful.
•Probably the least useful (but not uninteresting as I am always hopeful to find a name) is a list of ancestors with dates and places but without an article.

- Articles are of interest in only a few cases. They tend to be too academic [and] better suited to a publication for people interested in reading not research.
- [I] haven't found a lot that meets my personal research needs.
- That it is always late. I'd like to see you inch forward over say two years, having each issue arrive closer to the publication date.
- [I] realize the dominance of Swedes in the Midwest; however, I come from a "pocket" of Swedes in northern Worcester County, MA, and would like to see some Swedish-related stories/articles about New England.
- Lists are are done alphabetically, but chronologically. That is not good.
- I think that SAG has too much information and is too focused on the earliest immigrants. I want more information about the people who immigrated at the end of the nineteenth century.

Survey Question 7: How do you think the quality and/or usefulness of SAG could be *improved*?

- [Include] more general, how to do, and background articles.
- Have more on Midwest; some articles on church records and their usefulness in searching for Swedish ancestors.
- I think stories showing how people have discovered their Swedish roots through *SAG* would be welcome and most interesting.
- Transcribe vital records from Swedish American newspapers....Transcribe state census records for Swedish communities. (They are difficult for some of us to get on Inter-Library loan.)
- It should have more pages per year and more genealogical queries.
- Give names and addresses of accredited genealogists willing to undertake investigations and, if possible, your opinion of them.
- The quality is excellent now.
- More space for queries; but I would not want anything cut back to do so.
- I'd like more articles on Swedes/Swedish settlements in Minnesota; publish web address sites for Sweden/Swedish American genealogical groups; start a web site for queries through *SAG*; put more "lists" on the internet (with the address and a summary in *SAG*). Could permission be received to publish general interest articles from Swedish genealogical magazines?
- Discussion of Norwegians entering through Quebec to Chicago; Swedes in Kansas.
- I think more space needs to be devoted to search aids and general support for those of us in the trenches.
- Devote a lot more space to reader queries [and] less copy per query.
- I don't believe I can help here. You're doing OK!
- The halftones (illustrations) should be on coated paper stock to boost reproduction clarity.
- Keep up the variety; keep expanding the "how to" articles with sources both here and in Sweden.

- More articles of general interest, such as research "how to's," while continuing the publication of records that might not be available otherwise.
- What I would find of great interest would be the study of the parishes, villages and towns in Sweden from which the immigrants came. What did they look like? What, if any, maps of the towns, villages and parishes [are available]? It is helpful to know about the places emigrants left.
- [Include] some general articles to go along with very specific articles.
- More about me and less about other people!
- Stick to articles that will help the genealogist discover his/her past. Stay away from articles that The Swedish-American Historical Society prints (they are too highbrow or scholarly).
- Tell us if any of the queries in the ancestor searches ever lead to a discovery. Give us a follow-up.
- For those of us who do genealogical research, *SAG* should have more research-oriented articles, e.g., on finding aids or customs that might explain why something happened.
- Put lists and directories on the web. In fact, it would be great to have all the issues on the web.
- Give us Internet addresses for good quality information, particularly from Sweden. Also information on Swedish social and immigrant societies.
- Add more articles and content that are pre-Swedish-America (i.e., about the roots in Sweden of Swedish-American genealogy). This may require expanding the length of *SAG*. America needs a full-service publication on the order of Sweden's *Släkthistoriskt Forum*. I'm not sure that is the role *SAG* wants to fill, but I personally would like to see it.
- Perhaps more information on archives, libraries, etc., that contain Swedish material or even just a listing—on both sides of the Atlantic.
- [I] would like to see more "how to" articles for doing Swedish research without going to Sweden (preferably using my computer and Internet resources).
- I think you are doing it by this survey....Lists should be curtailed to only the most important.
- Articles about the history of each county in Sweden.
- *SAG* has always been on the right track—its readers friendly, not pedantic.
- Begin a one-page course lasting four issues or so on Gothic script. Short (6-8 line) examples taken from parish records could be published in one issue [and] then transliterated and translated in the following issue.
- Methodology articles for Swedish research; migration history (including both Swedish and American geographic areas); updates on genealogy in Sweden.
- Possibly a series on various counties in the Midwest with Swedish history.
- [Articles about what manors and estates] were like in the 1800s and what they are like now; [articles about] rail service in Sweden and the U.S. in the 1800s; articles on military service in Sweden.
- It needs to be larger.

- More articles in which people have found their ancestors in Sweden; more articles on nobility and clergy, from whom many of us descend; more articles on Swedish communities in the Midwest.
- Perhaps an occasional article on an individual genealogical archive in the various Swedish *län;* information on churches whose records burned or are otherwise not available; Canadian immigration/ports of entry.
- More maps and explanations regarding the counties, provinces and parishes in Sweden. Historical articles about boundary changes, social issues, and religion that caused unrest among Swedish people.
- I often wish that *SAG* would broaden its content to become *The Scandinavian-American Genealogist.* I would like to see more written about twentieth century genealogy (e.g., articles about Swedes who remained in Sweden and immigrants who arrived after 1900).
- I would like more articles about Swedes in Kansas. They seem to be neglected. How did they come? Were they sponsored by land companies, etc.? How about Swedes who set sail from Denmark?
- I would like to see more articles about Swedish life in earlier years. Historical accounts of events in various provinces could serve as enrichment in genealogical searches. As an example, I have several ancestors who were soldiers. I found Carl-Erik Johansson's article in the June 1994 issue...to be very helpful in understanding the everyday life of a Swedish soldier.
- More on research in Swedish archives and research institutes.
- Keep publishing.
- Is there material from Sweden that could be translated?
- More articles contributed by Swedish genealogists and scholars.
- Articles about history and customs in Sweden that affect what we see in Swedish records; articles about the fate and social standing of illegitimate babies and unwed mothers.
- Increase the part that Swenson Center at Augustana College plays as a location for central focus. They require [more] resources to be more effective.
- I do look forward to each issue and hope it is possible to adhere to publication dates such that we can receive [*SAG*] regularly every three months.
- By directing it to "real" people. An example would be the growth, in recent years, of *Ancestry* magazine. It used to be a six-page, dull piece of work, but it has shaped up into an interesting publication with varied information.
- I often wonder if *SAG* and the *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* could be combined into one periodical.
- More space for genealogical queries.
- Possibly every two years, list members' names and addresses and their surnames of interest.
- I'd like to read about late nineteenth and early twentieth-century emigrants and where they settled on the East Coast.
- More information about locating relatives in the U.S. and Canada.

- Help me put together the history of Swedes that came to southwest Missouri in the 1800s. There are fifteen towns in this area with Swedish roots.
- I believe *SAG*'s attractiveness can be maintained and even enhanced by good balance between academic and popular subject matter.
- Realizing the known sources of information on Swedes in the southern U.S. is somewhat limited, I still believe that more on and from this geographic area would be useful.
- *SAG* might reprint [historical] articles from Swedish journals. Why nothing on Swedes (and Danes) in the Caribbean? What about letters written home by Swedish diplomatic families from 19th century U.S.?
- For me (a Swede), it would be very helpful to learn more about how to find the immigrants in the U.S. at the end of the nineteenth century.
- [Include] more articles on "searching for" ancestors.

Unsolicited comments from respondents

- I will take *SAG* until I'm unable. I like it.
- I really appreciate the effort that goes into the publication of *SAG*. I'm happy to be a subscriber and grateful the magazine exists at all!
- Thanks. All in all, you do a good job.
- "Search for the Old Country" is a gem. It is written beautifully, expressing emotions all researchers know. At the same time, there is information about how to search for family roots.
- Keep up the good work!
- I have so much to learn...any help would be useful. A suggestion always makes one think of other sources. Keep up the good work!
- When *SAG* arrives, I drop everything and read it from cover to cover!
- Thank you. Wish you the best of luck and success.
- Thanks for the great publication and all the time and efforts of the editor and editorial committee to put *SAG* together. [It is] appreciated.
- I have an idea for an [article] myself, but I'm afraid you won't print it because I'm not a professional genealogist.
- A very fine journal!
- You do a good job. I found my great-grandfather twice in your magazine.
- Generally I find your publication very interesting.
- I admire your tenacity for trying to improve an interesting magazine. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you for seeking information about interests and for soliciting articles.
- Nils William has been an inspiration!
- I have appreciated my association with Nils William, whom I highly admire.
- Thanks for the opportunity to give input and for trying to make *SAG* an even better publication.
- I do think *SAG* is an above-average publication and salute your efforts to continue this quality.

Conclusion

I am encouraged by the realization that most *SAG* subscribers/readers have a high or moderately high overall impression of the journal. Such numbers could be used to support the notion that change is not necessary. The old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," comes to mind. Nonetheless, I am disturbed by the fact that there is, in some cases, a poor correlation between *SAG*'s historical publishing effort (see Table 1) and the current interests of survey respondents (see Table 2). For example, Genealogical Aids ranked first in current interest but only sixth in historical output. Similarly, Searching For ranked second in current interest but eighth in historical output. Interestingly, the Annual Index, Genealogical Queries and Biographies ranked third, fourth, and fifth, respectively, in both surveys. *SAG* subscribers/readers have also spoken clearly about their interest in articles on how to do genealogy and the use of the Internet and the computer in genealogical research. *The current imbalances that have been illuminated by the two surveys on SAG clearly need to be addressed and redressed.*

I am intrigued by the indefinite (indefinable?) character of *SAG* subscribers/readers. It brings to mind students in my biology classes whose academic abilities, educational backgrounds, ages, interests, motivations, maturity levels, ethnic backgrounds, and social circumstances span the spectrum of possibilities. Similarly, *SAG* subscribers/readers seem to epitomize diversity vis-a-vis Swedish American genealogy. Even a cursory look at the self-reported interests and disinterests of respondents seems to confirm this. It is reflected in such areas as degree of familiarity with primary source material (Swedish and American), research technique and ability, experience and skill, knowledge of history and geography, parochial versus global outlooks, scholarly versus general interests, etc. Thus, my challenge will be (as it was for my predecessor) to deliver a quality product that appeals to a rather diverse community of readers.

Finally, I would remind you that this "special forum beamed at Swedish America" requires your active and direct support if it is to continue to inspire, assist, and instill enthusiasm in Swedish American genealogists. If you want to see more Genealogical Queries published, submit them. If you want to see more "how to do" or "success in finding ancestors" articles, write them. Share your expertise; your story; your knowledge of new software; or your latest discoveries on the Internet. In the inaugural issue Nils William noted that "*SAG* belongs to its readers." I couldn't agree more! I encourage all of you to become active participants in future issues of *SAG,* so that your journal will truly be reflective of your diverse interests and abilities.

New CD—*Svenska ortnamn* (Swedish Place Names)—Now Available

A new CD, *Svenska ortnamn,* which contains more than 400,000 Swedish place names is now available. The CD can be run on a PC with Windows 3.1 or higher and 8MB RAM or more. The graphics require a color monitor and a full installation requires 50MB of free space on your hard drive. Sorry, but a Macintosh version is not available.

The Swedish Federation of Genealogical Societies (*Sveriges släktforskarförbund*) purchased a copy of a database from the General Surveyor's Office *(Lantmäteriverket),* which contained all of the names that can be found on modern topographical ("green") maps in the scale of 1:50,000, and then had a modern search program made for it. The names are all in modern spelling but, with a little imagination, one can also find old places. For example, remember that "Hvetlanda" is now "Vetlanda."

With the CD, *Svenska ortnamn,* you can search for a place name and, as a result, you will find a blue-colored dot on a map of Sweden. At the bottom of the screen you will find the names of the parish and county in which the place is located. You will also get a reference to which topographical ("green") map you would need to buy to find more details. You will also get the exact coordinates on the grid for Sweden.

With multiple hits you get a number of red dots on the map. You can then scroll down the results list and see how the colored dot changes from red to blue for each place you are searching. You can search for place names, endings of names, middle parts of names, parishes, counties, special subjects (e.g., airfields, manor houses, churches, and lakes), or a combination of all of them.

This CD can be ordered from me, for a special *Swedish American Genealogist* price of $50, which includes postage and handling. The ordinary price from the Federation is $67 (members) or $80 (non-members). Send me your order now, and I will mail you the CD with an invoice as soon as possible.

Elisabeth Thorsell, Swedish genealogist & editor
Hästskovägen 45, 177 39 Järfälla, SWEDEN
e-mail: <et.genealogy@mailbox.swipnet.se>
http://home4.swipnet.se/~w-49407/

Genealogical Queries

Genealogical queries from subscribers to *Swedish American Genealogist* will be listed here free of charge on a "space available" basis. The editor reserves the right to edit these queries to conform to a general format. The inquirer is responsible for the contents of the query.

Andersson

I am seeking descendants of my mother's father's brother *(morfars bror),* Pehr Andersson, b. in Filborna 15, Helsingborg (Malm.) 24 May 1855, the son of Anders Olsson and Johanna Persdotter. He left Sweden for America in 1880 and may have headed for Worcester, Massachusetts.

I am also trying to connect my *morfarmors far,* Per Andersson (b. 6 January 1822), husband of Bengta Svensdotter (b. in Raus Parish, Malm., 17 January 1803), with Pehr Andersson (b. in Ullstorp Parish, Krist., 1800), son of Anders Jönsson (b. in Sörby Parish, Krist., 1756) and Kjersti Svensdotter (b. in Knislinge Parish, Krist., 1772).

George H. Minkler
326 Stewart Avenue
Waukegan, IL 60085
e-mail: <ghmink@aol.com> **1172**

Rambo

Beverly Rambo asked me to continue her work and publish a second edition of her book, *The Rambo Family Tree.* I am requesting corrections, additions, and supplemental information. If you will kindly send me information, I will send you a copy of the appropriate pages prior to publication, and I will amplify Beverly's practice of crediting contributors by using footnotes in addition to a list of references.

Beverly died of cancer on 30 June 1990. She had accumulated enough additions and corrections to produce a volume half again as large as the 1000-page original. Before she died, she asked me to publish another edition "within five years." Unfortunately, I arrived in Los Angeles the day after she died, and she had not put her wishes into her will. Her executor has stonewalled all efforts to pursue Beverly's written wishes and her "22 linear feet" of Rambo material has been "disposed of."

Consequently, I am accumulating materials independently. Besides family group sheets and family trees, please send me *copies*, not originals, of records proving family relationships, such as Bible records, wills, birth/marriage/death certificates, deeds, church records, etc. As I said, Beverly's materials are gone, and I'd love to compile a similar collection to send the Historical Society of Pennsylvania for their archives, as Beverly intended.

Ron Beatty
P.O. Box 2142
Shawnee Mission, KS 66201
e-mail: <RSBeatty@aol.com> **1173**

Andersson

Jonas Andersson, b. in Grolanda Parish (Skar.) 22 October 1817, married Maria Lisa Magnusdotter, b. in Hällestad Parish (Älvs.) 26 September 1819. Their two sons (both b. in Hällestad) were Pehr August, b. 1850, and Frans Gustaf, b. 1853. In 1854 the family immigrated to the United States. They had relatives who lived in Knox Co., Illinois. Where did they locate in the U.S.?

Hal Bern
2341 E. Lynnwood Dr.
Longview, WA 98632
e-mail: <halby5443@AOL.com> **1174**

Bengtsson, Bangston, Benson

Christina Johansdotter, b. in Hällestad Parish (Älvs.) 30 October 1833, married in 1853 Anders Bengtsson, b. in Källunga Parish (Älvs.) 19 November 1821. Their Swedish-born children were Johan Alfrid, b. 1854; Cläes, b. 1855; Johanna Charlotta, b. 1860; and Klara Maria, b. 1862. The family immigrated to the United States in 1863 and located in Knox Co., Illinois. Additional children born in the U.S. included Albert, b. 1865; Oscar, b. 1867; Henry, b. 1870; Clara, b. 1873; and Walter, b. 1876. The family used the surnames Benson and Bangston in the U.S. Are there living descendants of this family who could shed light on what happened to Christina and Anders?

Hal Bern
2341 E. Lynnwood Dr.
Longview, WA 98632
e-mail: <halby5443@AOL.com> **1175**

Lomjansgutten, Lumiainen

I am compiling biographical information on my great-great-grandfather, Per Jönsson Lumiainen, who is better known to history as Lomjansgutten. He was b. on Lake Lomsen in Lekvattnet Parish (Värm.) 22 October 1816 and d. 19 May 1875. He lived most of his life at Lomjanstorp in Gräsmark Parish (Värm.).

Per Jönsson Lomjansgutten was a well-known Swedish folk musician in nineteenth-century Värmland. Although he was known by many names—Lomiansguten, Lomiasguten, Lomjansguten, Lomjans-Per, Lom-Jansguten, Lumiainen—he was most frequently called Lomjansgutten.

After Lomjansgutten's death, his sheet music was sold at auction in Sweden, reportedly for 50 *öre* or 1 *krona*. Ultimately, his auctioned music ended up somewhere in America.

I am interested in knowing if anyone knows the whereabouts of Lomjansgutten's auctioned music. I would be very much interested in either purchasing my ancestor's music or, if this is not possible, at least getting copies.

Bergit Olin
Krontallsvägen 15 C
774 62 Avesta
SWEDEN **1176**

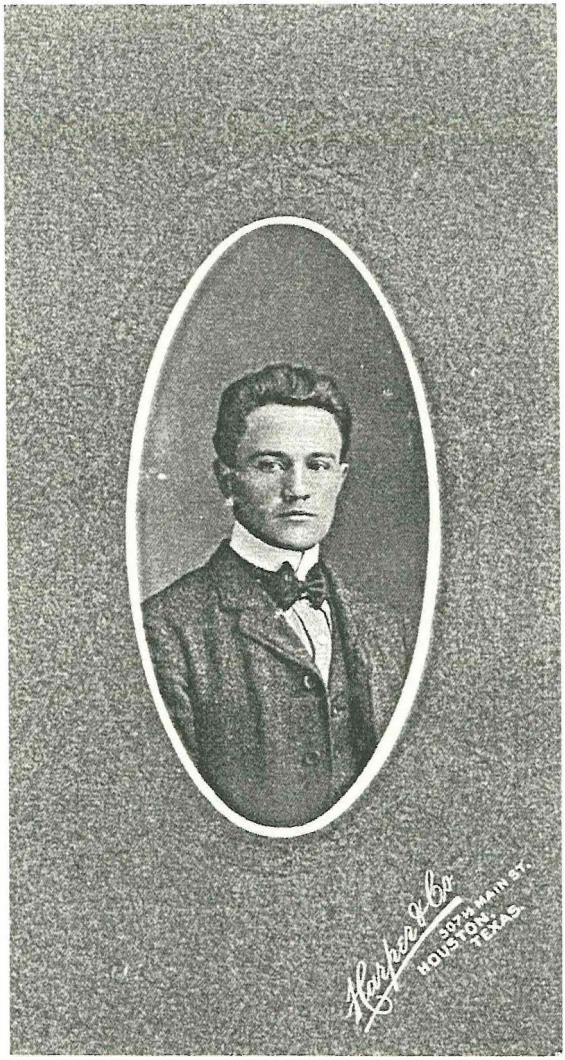
Holmquist (Bjelkengren)

I am searching for any information about Carl Pet(t)er Holmquist (Bjelkengren). Carl Peter was b. in Ignaberga Parish (Krist.) 13 November 1868. He was the illegitimate child of the maid, Cecilia Bjelkengren, b. in Gryt Parish (Krist.) 30 September 1841. The father is unknown.

In 1873 Cicilia and Carl Peter moved to Killeberg, Loshult Parish (Krist.). On 7 February 1873, Cicilia Bjelkengren married the baker, Gustaf Johnsson Holmquist, b. in Stenbrohult Parish (Kron.) 22 July 1842. On 15 April 1878, Carl Peter got his moving certificate [*flyttningsbevis*] to travel to North America. It appears as though the nine-year-old boy traveled alone, but he could have been in the company of someone unknown.

Nils William Olsson, whose uncle was married to Carl Peter's half sister, once told me that one time back in the 1920s, when he and his father visited Killeberg in Loshult Parish, Carl Peter's half sister asked Nils William's father if he could visit her half brother in Texas. Unfortunately, when back in the United States, the Olssons did not have the opportunity to go to Texas.

I am sending a photograph found among the half sister's remaining papers. The young man in the photograph could be Carl Peter. Does anyone have any



Carl Pet(t)er Holmquist (Bjelkengren)? Note the name and address of the studio: Harper & Co., 507 1/2 Main St., Houston, Texas.

Bengt Holmquist
Trappstigen 24
791 37 Falun
Sweden
e-mail: <bengt.holmquist@Itdalarna.se> **1177**

Swedish World War I Veterans in New York

I was recently rereading the June 1998 issue of *SAG,* which contained an article on Swedish immigrants in Illinois who served in World War I. I started thinking that there might be a *SAG* reader who knows about Swedish World War I veterans in New York.

Some time ago I bought a medal with the Statue of Liberty on it. The front side of the medal also has the date 24 May 1919. The reverse side of the medal has the following words: "From the Swedish Americans of New York" and "Tribute to our Boys." The ribbon is yellow and blue. I am interested in finding out who organized the project to award these medals, and I would also like to know how many were given.

I have already written to the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Inc., 599 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1204, New York, NY 10022, but they did not know. They suggested that I contact *Myntkabinettet* in Stockholm, however, I doubt whether anyone in Sweden would have knowledge of this relatively unknown medal.

Do you know anyone who might be able to help me?

Mike Knudson
422 Garden Dr.
Bismarck, ND 58504 **1178**

Svensson, Holmberg

I am interested in obtaining more information about three relatives who emigr. from Sweden to the U.S. This is what I do know about these individuals. Oskar Teodor Svensson was b. in Jämjö Parish (Blek.) 21 May 1893 and emigr. 22 November 1916. Nanny Mari Holmberg was b. in Augerum Parish (Blek.) 13 December 1872 and emigr. 13 March 1896. Johan Alfred Holmberg was b. in Augerum Parish 27 June 1886. His year of emigr. is unknown. Nanny and Johan Alfred were siblings. I do not know where any of them lived in the U.S.

This is not much to go on but I hope that someone may be able to help me.

Marie Holmberg
Ö. Stationsv. 5
S-373 00 Jämjö
SWEDEN **1179**

Larsson

I need help locating information about my grandmother's sister, Märta Karolina Larsson, who was b. in Ragunda Parish (Jämt.) 7 December 1892. Using the CD *Emigranten* in The Regional Archives of Gothenburg

(Landsarkivet i Göteborg), I have learned that she and her entire family left Göteborg on 15 June 1906, with Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada, listed as their destination. The following Larsson family members emigrated: Karl E. (father), age 43; Sara (mother), 35; and nine children— Lars, age 14; Märta, age 13; Katrina, age 11; Hulda, age 10; Anders, age 8; Elias, age 6; Waldemar, age 4; Astrid, age 3; and Klara, age 1.

The Larsson family, with the exception of Märta, returned to Sweden in 1909. At the time, Märta was working for a doctor's family in Yorkton. My mother told me that the family never heard anything from Märta after 1911. It is not known if Märta ever married.

A Canadian researcher, Ian Mitchner, has located two significant records: Karl Larsson's homestead claim (dated 31 July 1906) and abandonment certificate (dated 11 March 1908). On the homestead claim, Karl gave his postal address as Willowbrook, Saskatchewan.

Ian has posted a web site with more specific details regarding his research into the "disappearance" of Märta. The site has the title "A Saskatchewan Mystery" and may be found at the following address: <http://www3.sk.sympatico.ca/mitchner/marta2.htm>

Johnny Lindén
Riksdalersgatan 24
414 81 Göteborg
SWEDEN
e-mail: Johnny_Linden@yahoo.com>

1180

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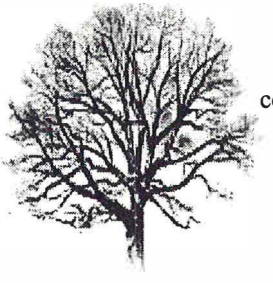

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of the home,
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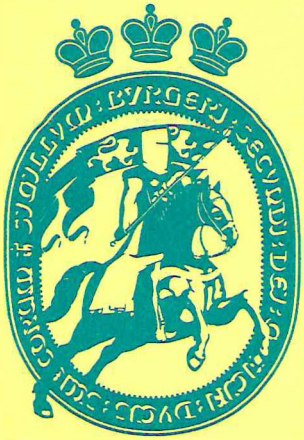

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